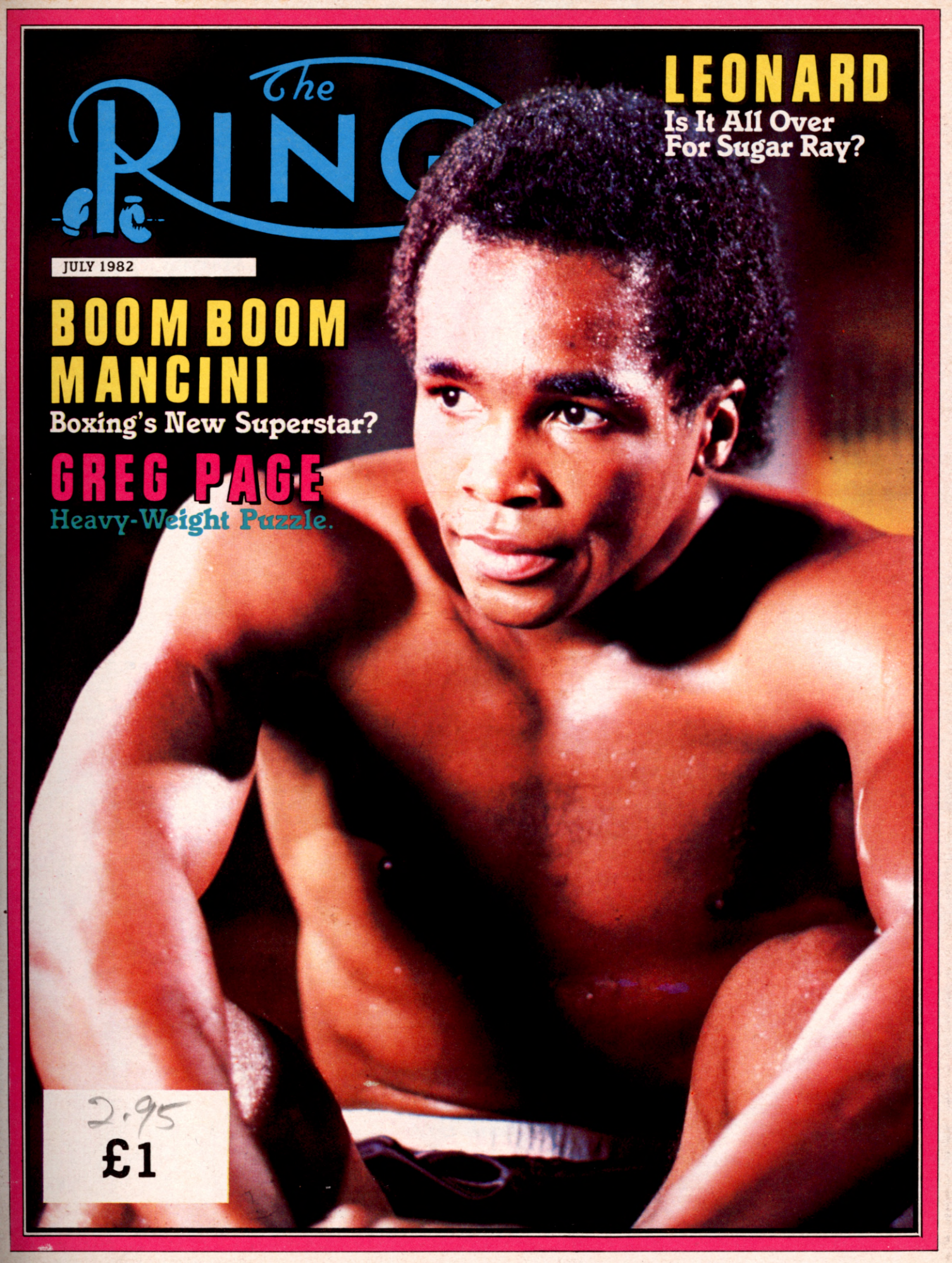
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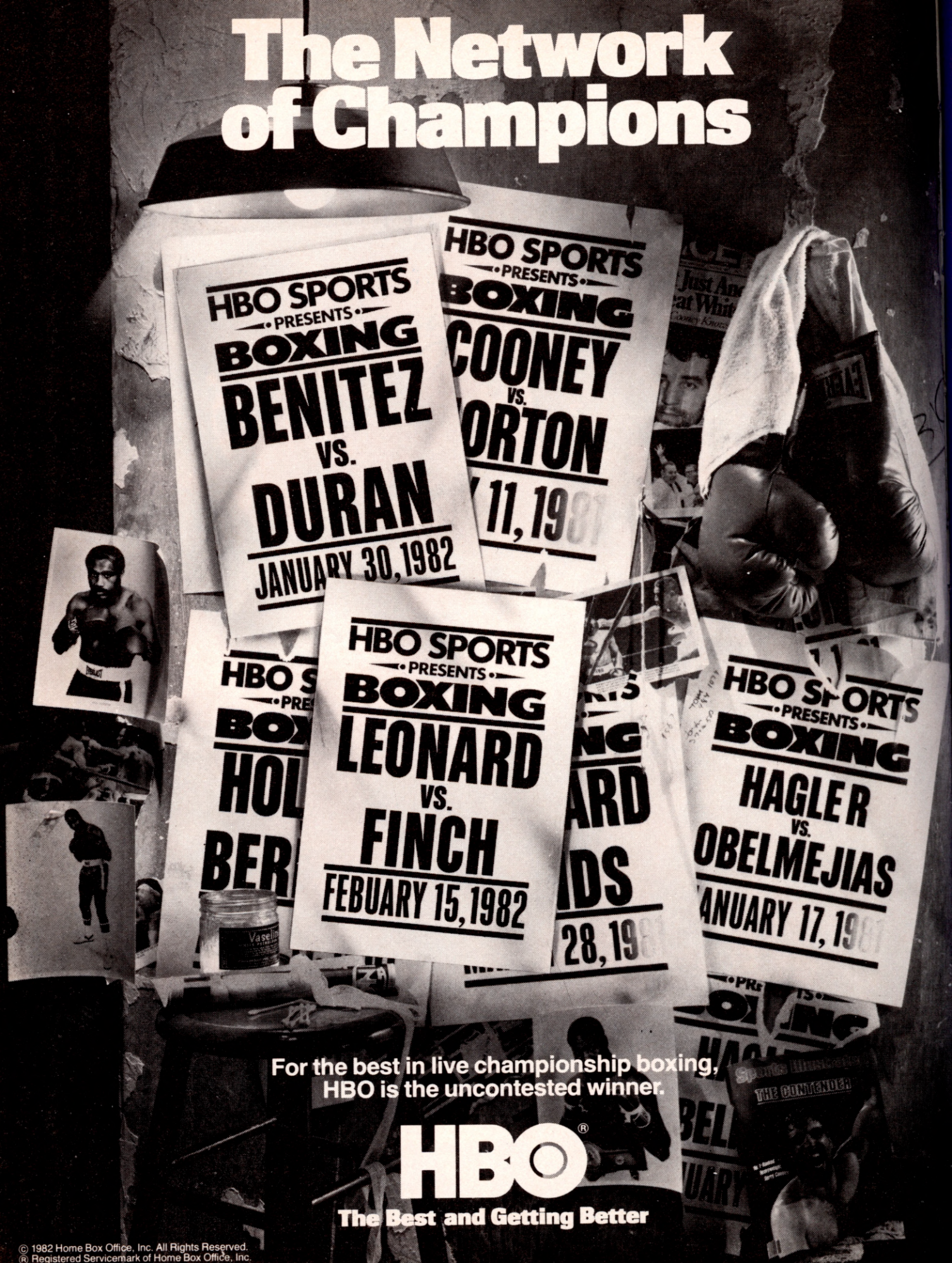

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The RING
CHAMPIONSHIP BELT

SAAD MUHAMMAD

WORLD LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION 1979-1981

Born in Philadelphia in 1954 . . . Height: 5'11½" . . . Has a solid chin and the biggest heart in boxing . . . One of the toughest, bravest champions of all time . . . Managed by Bilal Muhammad . . . Turned pro as Matthew Franklin in 1974 . . . Lost a close decision to Wayne McGee in his seventh fight . . . Drew with McGee three fights later . . . Lost a highly-controversial decision to Marvin Camel in October, 1976, in Missoula, Montana . . . Missoula is Camel's home town . . . Faced Eddie Gregory on March 11, 1977 in a 10-round bout . . . Dropped Gregory (now known as Eddie Mustafa Muhammad) in the first round before losing a 10-round split-decision . . . Became an aggressive fighter after that bout . . . The change of his style and attitude turned his career around . . . Became known as the "Big Matt Attack" . . . During the next two years, knocked out many of the top contenders in thrilling bouts . . . Included in the group were Marvin Johnson, Billy Douglas, Richie Kates and Alvaro (Yaqui) Lopez . . . On April 22, 1979, challenged WBC light heavyweight king Marvin Johnson, who was hoping to avenge his loss to Matthew 21 months earlier . . . In a bout voted by RING as 1979's second-best fight, Johnson was halted in the eighth round . . . Following his title-winning victory, Matthew Franklin changed his name to Matthew Saad Muhammad . . . Successfully retained his title once in 1979, coming from behind and overcoming severe eye cuts to decision former WBC titlist John Conteh . . . In a rematch seven months later, knocked out Conteh in the fourth round . . . Followed with three more title defenses during the year . . . One of those defenses, against Yaqui Lopez on July 13, was not only 1980's "Fight of the Year," but one of the most savage light heavyweight title fights in history . . . Round eight of that bout was selected by The RING as "Round of the Year" . . . Ended 1980 with a successful defense against highly-regarded Lotte Mwale . . . In defense of his crown in 1981, he knocked out Vonzell Johnson, Murray Sutherland and Jerry Martin, before running into the "Camden Buzzsaw," Dwight Braxton . . . On December 19th, Braxton stopped Muhmmad in the 10th round to win the world light heavyweight crown . . . Anxiously awaits a rematch against Braxton and a possible title unification against WBA champion Michael Spinks . . . Will long be remembered as one of boxing's most exciting fighters.

MATTHEW SAAD MUHAMMAD
(AKA Matthew Franklin)
Born, June 16, 1954, Philadelphia, Pa. Weight, 175 lbs. Height, 5 ft. 11 in.

	1974		
Jan.	14—Billy Early, Philadelphia	KO	2
Feb.	25—Bele Apolosa, Paris	W	4
Mar.	11—Roy Ingram, Philadelphia	W	4
May	22—Joe Middleton, Philadelphia	KO	5
July	15—Joe Jones, Philadelphia	KO	3
Sept.	10—Lloyd Richardson, Philadelphia	KO	4
Oct.	22—Joe Middleton, Alexandria, Va.	KO	2
Dec.	10—Wayne McGee, Philadelphia	L	6
	1975		
Feb.	25—Vandell Woods, Philadelphia	KO	6
July	24—Roosevelt Brown, Philadelphia	KO	4
Oct.	21—Wayne McGee, Philadelphia	D	6
	1976		
Feb.	13—Harold Carter, Baltimore	W	10
May	21—Mate Parlov, Milan	W	8
July	17—Marvin Camel, Stockton	W	10
Sept.	15—Bobby Walker, Scranton	KO	4
Oct.	23—Marvin Camel, Missoula	L	10
Dec.	3—Mate Parlov, Trieste	D	10
	1977		
Mar.	11—Eddie Gregory, Philadelphia	L	10
Apr.	21—Joe Maye, Wilmington	W	10
June	23—Ed Turner, Philadelphia	KO	6
July	26—Marvin Johnson, Philadelphia (Won Vacant NABF Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	12
Sept.	17—Billy Douglas, Philadelphia (Retained NABF Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	6
Nov.	1—Lee Royster, Philadelphia	W	10
	1978		
Feb.	10—Richie Kates, Philadelphia (Retained NABF Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	6
June	19—Dale Grant, Philadelphia	KO	5
Aug.	16—Freddie Bright, Newark	KO	8
Oct.	24—Yaqui Lopez, Philadelphia (Retained NABF Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	11
	1979		
Apr.	22—Marvin Johnson, Indianapolis (Won WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	8
Aug.	18—John Conteh, Atlantic City (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	W	15
	1980		
Mar.	29—John Conteh, Atlantic City (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	4
May	13—Louis Pergaud, Halifax, N.S. (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	5
July	13—Yaqui Lopez, McAfee, N.J. (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	14
Nov.	28—Lotte Mwale, San Diego (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	4
	1981		
Feb.	28—Vonzell Johnson, Atlantic City (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	11
Apr.	25—Murry Sutherland, Atlantic City (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	9
Sept.	26—Jerry Martin, Atlantic City (Retained WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	11
Dec.	19—Dwight Braxton, Atlantic City (Lost WBC Light Heavyweight Title)	KO	10
	1982		
Apr.	17—Pete McIntyre, Atlantic City	KO	2

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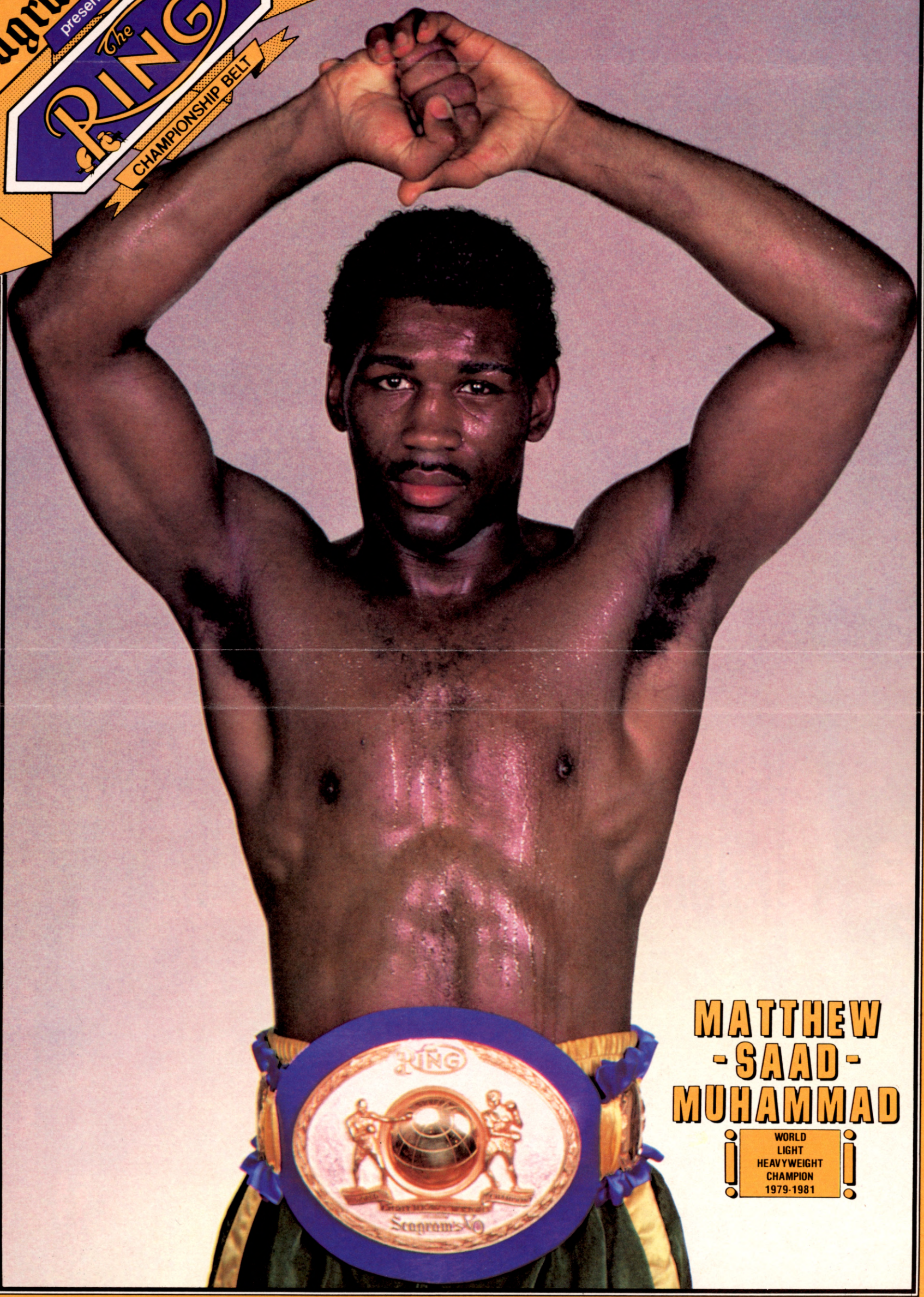

MATTHEW -SAAD- MUHAMMAD

WORLD LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION 1979-1981

JULY

JULY 4th: Heavyweight Champion Jack Johnson knocks out Jim Jeffries in first "Fight of The Century, 15 rounds, Reno, Nevada. 1910. **JULY 17:** Al Singer kayoes Sammy Mandell in first round to win lightweight championship of the world, Yankee Stadium, New York. 1930. **JULY 18:** Jersey Joe Walcott wins heavyweight championship in fifth attempt kayoing Ezzard Charles with a left hook in seventh round, Forbes Field, Pittsburgh, Pa. 1951.

TH	F	S	S	M	T	W
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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The RING
The bible of boxing

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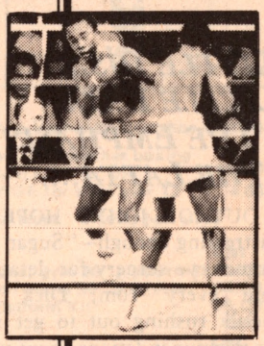

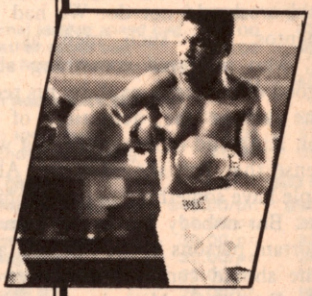

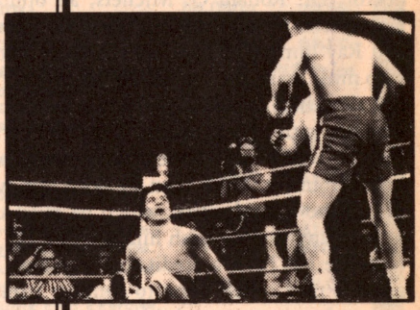

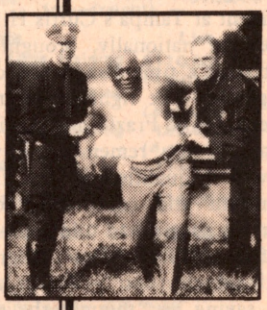

RINGSIDE

A LITTLE DISA, A LITTLE DATA, WITH THE EMPHASIS ON THE LATTA....

THE WORD OUT OF JOHNS HOPKINS hospital was distressing enough—"Sugar Ray Leonard undergoes eye surgery for detached retina"—without every Tom, Dick and pseudo Jonas Salk rushing out to get into print with their recommendations about what Ray should or should not do. We had pronounciamentos from such men as Jose Sulaiman, who muttered something about "for the good of boxing"—as if, by his recent actions he knows the definition of the term—Don King and others practicing without a license that Ray should retire. All of these people have something to gain from his retirement. But nobody has heard from the most important persons in the equation as to whether he should continue or retire: His doctor, Dr. Ronald G. Michels, an ophthalmologist at Johns Hopkins, his wife, Juanita, and Ray himself. These are the three people who must make the "go-no go" decision. We, like all of boxing, will await Ray's decision, in tandem with those people most concerned with his well-being—none of whom have been heard from yet. Until then we wish him well. And, if he should retire, which he must ultimately, anyway, we wish him nothing but the best. He has been a credit to the game. The game is now called upon to conduct itself in an equal manner towards him.

A recent incident at Tampa's Curtis Hixon Hall, and televised nationally, brought to light one of boxing's time-dishonored customs: Foul Fighting. The fight in question was one between Mark Frazie and Dwight "Tiger" Walker. If you remember, it was Walker who was disqualified in the fifth round for constant and continually fouling—even after his corner had told him, between rounds four and five, "Don't disgrace yourself on national television"—Walker later was quoted as saying he "thought the deal was dirty, period." And his manager-trainer, Karriem Allah, released a statement to the press holding that "the fight was refereed dishonorably by the presiding referee, Arthur Mercante." Having witnessed the fight we can only agree with "Tiger" that it was "dirty, period." But what was dirty was his continual tactic of throwing punches South of the Border in the general vicinity of Frazie's groin. Arthur Mercante, who, not incidentally, has officiated at no less than 47 world title bouts, performed the most important duty a referee has to perform: that of keeping control of the fight. When he found it to be impossible to maintain control because of Walker's flagrant fouling, he did the only thing he could do, disqualify the fighter who was the constant cause of the breakdown in control. Otherwise, Mssrs. Walker and Allah, why bother with rules and regulations? Why not just conduct boxing bouts as if they were wrestling exhibitions? Then you could foul till your heart's content. And then we could revert to a suggestion first put forward by boxing writer Wilbur Woods in the heyday of "fouls"—circa 1930-'31. Woods suggested all fouls be treated "as they are in soccer. The innocent victim of the foul blow would get a free penalty shot, with the perpetrator held in the corner by the victim's cornermen." Maybe *that* would work better for "Tiger".

BERT R. SUGAR

July, 1982
Vol. LXI, No. 5

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Nat Fleischer
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Editor & Publisher
Bert Randolph Sugar

Associate Publisher
Nat Loubet

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Randy Gordon

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Assistant Editors
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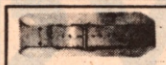

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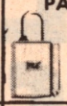

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ROUND ONE

FEEDING THE HAND THAT BITES IT

JUST WHEN YOU THINK THE WBA's done everything in its power to ruin what little reputation it has left, still another horror story comes along to prove that these men practice the divine right of fools. Seems that Houston promoter Peter Garcia has been attempting for some time now to put together a title bout between WBA Junior Featherweight champ Sergio Palma and Roberto Rubaldino. Just when it appeared that everything was in readiness for signatures, Garcia was notified by a prospective TV buyer that they couldn't purchase the broadcast rights for the show since Rubaldino had been dropped from the rarified atmosphere of the WBA ratings.

Next day, after predictably receiving no answer from Panama City, Garcia's matchmaker contacted the WBA's representative in the U.S., Bobby Lee, to find out what "the hell was going on." What Lee told him defies logic: Rubaldino was replaced in the ratings due to "lack of information." What makes the answer even more unbelievable is that Rubaldino has been active—six fights, six wins in '81, so far in '82—had been ranked by the WBA for some time now and holds a decision over Jorge Lujan, who was deemed suitable by the WBA for a shot against the very same Lujan.

What puzzles us is why the WBA, feeling itself qualified to rate boxers, doesn't seek information from informed sources on the current activities of its "Top Ten" men? Maybe they should order *The Ring Record Book*. That is, if they can ever figure out where to send the order. But, again, that presupposes they can read, doesn't it?

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING DEPT.

FORGET THE TRADITIONAL Mother's Day gifts of flowers and candy. Now a new one has been added to the growing list of gifts Mom can't do without: *The Ring Record Book*.

For Mother's Day, 1982, Matthew Saad Muhammad, former light heavyweight champ, sent the 1981 *Ring Record Book*—complete with his picture on the cover—to his new mother-in-law up in Anchorage, Alaska, to explain what her new son-in-law did for a living. As if he had to explain to anyone who has ever seen him in one of his patented battles-to-the-finish.

LENDING A HELPING GLOVE

BOXING HAS ALWAYS VIEWED those who have appeared in classic confrontations as a team entry—as witnessed by Dempsey-Tunney, Pep-Saddler, Robinson-LaMotta being uttered in one syllable without so much as an intake of air between the names.

Now the '80s promise to add one more quinella to those pairs who have become as familiar as Laurel & Hardy, Sears & Roebuck and Fric and Frack in other fields: Alexis Arguello and Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini.

Not only did this twosome put on one of the best fights of the still-young decade, but their paths continue to cross—up to, and including, each sharing half of the lightweight championship, as carved up by the respective overseeing bodies. Those who watched the Arguello-Mancini fight last October remember Arguello's moving comments at the end of the fight to Mancini, "You should be very proud . . . some day you will become a great world's champion." Now he is moving to help Mancini realize that goal.

David Wolf, Mancini's manager, admits that "a very strange relationship exists between us and the Arguello camp." Strange isn't the word Wolf is looking for; it may well be comraderly. For Arguello's agent set up Mancini's training headquarters in Tucson before the Frias and got Mancini & Camp their gym, made the hotel reservations and even shared his gym time with his competitor-friend.

And they said politics make strange bedfellows . . .

THE NAME GAME

IT CERTAINLY BEATS HAVING A rest area on the New Jersey Turnpike named for you, as Vince Lombardi does. The "it" is a new school in this case is the Newark, New Jersey high school named after the former two-time heavyweight champion, Floyd Patterson High School.

THERE'S NO DOG IN ALI'S DOGGEREL

FOR YEARS MUHAMMAD ALI spouted out little couplets which sounded like they came out of "The Child's Garden of Verses." For Archie Moore he intoned "They all must fall in the round I call . . ." For Doug Jones he gave it something more: "Jones likes to Mix/So I'll let it go six./If he talks jive,/I'll cut it to five./And if he talks some more/I'll cut it to four."

Suffice it to say Jones went the distance, not impressed with Ali's pre-fight poetic stance. Now it comes to pass that someone else once took issue with his poetry. Angelo Dundee, his trainer, recounted the time "a guy grabbed me and said he was going to sue Muhammad for stealing his stuff." But Dundee countered by telling Boxing's Bacon, "You must be kidding. Then everybody will know you wrote the poem . . . and it strinks!" The would-be poet went the way of Moore and Jones.

FINE TUNING

A MEASURE OF BOXING'S CURrent upsurge is the Nielsen Ratings boxing begets on TV, measured in terms of number of total TV sets tuned in. Of the six fights televised by CBS during the first quarter of '82, all but one outdrew the average audience for college basketball, supposedly the big audience builder for the period. Led by Art Frias vs. Ernesto Espana with a 10 rating, and Eusebio Pedroza vs. Juan LaPorte with a 9.9 rating, they went all the way down to Thomas Hearns vs. Marcos Geraldo, which trailed the six-pack with a 7.2 rating and was the only fight which did not surpass college "baskets" average audience.

BARTENDER'S TRIVIA CORNER

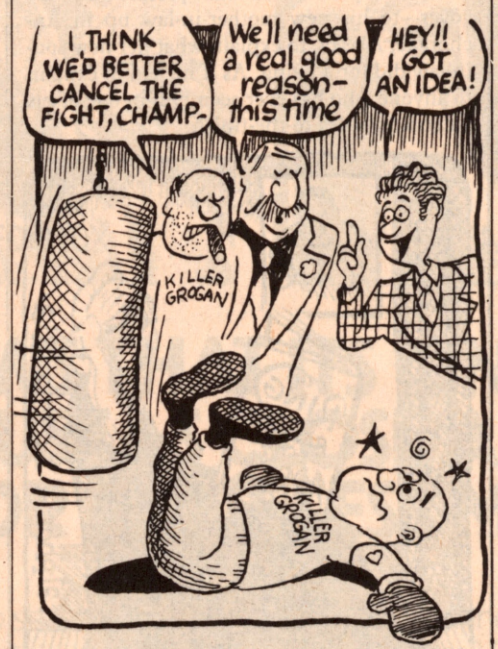
WHO BOXED THE MOST draws in championship fights?

Last Month's Bartender's Trivia Corner Question: Which champion was voted one of the ten greatest boxers of all time in a recent *Ring* poll, yet won fewer than half of his recorded bouts?

Answer: Benjamin Leiner, who fought under the name Benny Leonard from 1911 through 1932, was selected by a Blue-Ribbon panel of experts as the fifth greatest fighter of all time in the February, 1980 issue of *The Ring.* However, Leonard fought most of his career in those quasi-prehistoric days when no-decision bouts were the rule rather than the exception. Going into battle a total of 210 times, he won 89, 71 by KO's, drew one, lost just five and fought 115 no-decision bouts, a winning "batting" average of only .424, tying him with Rogers Hornsby in baseball, but falling far short of winning half his recorded bouts.

ONE WAY TO UNTRACK A FIGHT

ADD TO THE RECENT RASH OF postponements yet another. And this one for a heretofore unheard of reason. Seems that a show was cancelled in Houston last May 15th because—get this!—the promotional group's "P. R. man" was sentenced to five years in the state slammer for child molesting. Apparently the jury didn't believe the alibi forwarded by the defendant that he was "just attempting to relieve himself while waiting for a train." Maybe he should have pleaded "lack of toilet train-ing."



DOWN FOR THE COUNT

ROCKY SCOTT—nee Donald P. Post, age 82, former boxer and boxing historian from the Rochester, N.Y. area passed away on Feb. 27th at the Rochester General Hospital after suffering a heart attack. Rocky, who fought more than 200 professional bouts in the Rochester area between 1917 and 1928, was perhaps best known for his extensive collection of Rochester boxing memorabilia. He was a past president of the World Boxing Historians 1967, and also the Vice President of the Rochester Boxing Association until his death.

JACK PUGGY—nee Salvatore Riccuiti, age 80, of Philadelphia, recently passed away. Puggy, a well-known Phillie boxing figure, was one-time manager of Willie Reddish, Lew Massey and Mike Evans, among others. He served as matchmaker for the prominent Philadelphia promoter Herman Taylor and was an excellent cut man during a lifetime in boxing that began when was a youngster in his teens.

SAM McGEE—Orange, N.J. fight manager and gym owner died in March. Sam was a great friend of the late Tony Galento and a member of Ring 25 IVBA Union and Essex Counties, N.J.

PHIL COLLURA—Former Newark, N.J. fighter, and brother of the late Chang Collura, who was one of the best amateur fighters in the State of New Jersey. Phil was a member of the Belleville N.J. Boxers' Club.

JERRY GRIEFF—Ex heavyweight pro of the thirties from New York, died in March Jerry was the 1st vice president of Ring 8 New York and was retired Captain from the U.S. Army.

PETER SAVAGE, the co-author of Jake LaMotta's autobiography "Raging Bull" died recently in the Caribbean.

"REST IN PEACE"

PUNCHLINES

FORMER MIDDLEWEIGHT champion Joey Giardello, on the ravages of age: "First your legs go; then your coordination goes; then your friends go."

Gordie Racette, the much-traveled Canadian heavyweight, after being KO'd by Trevor Berbick and Jimmy Young: "Young paralyzed the left side of my face and Berbick the right . . . This is not what I had in mind when I started boxing."

Dwight Braxton, current WBC light heavyweight champ, on his proposed rematch with Matthew Saad Muhammad: "The next time we fight I'm going to knock the 'A' out of him so he'll be Sad Muhammad." □

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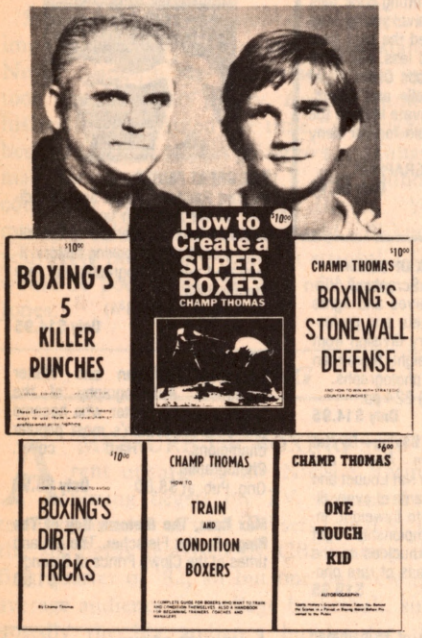

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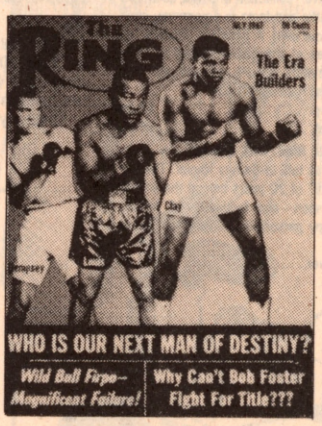
30 YEARS AGO

JULY 1952: FUTURE BOUTS WERE DISCUSSED IN THE issue. Jersey Joe Walcott was slated to defend his title against former champion Ezzard Charles, with Rocky Marciano, number two rated contender meeting the winner. Joe Louis believed Charles would defeat Walcott, close to 40 years old at that time, and become the first man ever to regain the crown. Louis felt that Marciano was a bit too green for Charles or Walcott, but added, "In a year's time he might be real good if he can smarten up a bit." In another major bout, Joey Maxim was scheduled to defend his light-heavyweight crown against middleweight title holder Ray Robinson, the latter to defend his crown against Randy Turpin; Sugar Ray took the Maxim match instead because of the lucrative purse he was offered. Willie Pep-on the comeback trail, took a ten-round decision from Santiago Gonzales. Even thought Pep was a bit rusty, the Will O' the Wisp felt he still had what it takes to regain his former greatness.

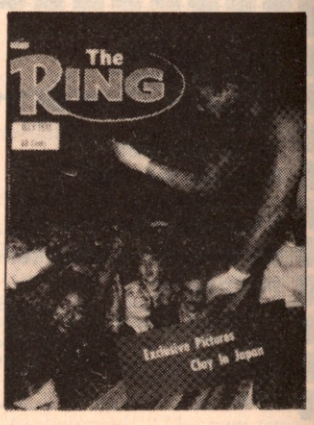
15 YEARS AGO

JULY 1967: MUHAMMAD ALI WAS IN SERIOUS TROUBLE with the Federal authorities because of the heavyweight champion's refusal to join the armed forces. As Ali's appeal against the draft was under review, Boxing Organizations such as the WBA and the New York State athletic Commission announced their intention of stripping Ali's title and setting up an elimination tournament to find a successor. However Ring Editor Nat Fleischer would not back up any "title strippers" at that time on the ground that a title must be won or lost in the ring, nowhere else. Fleischer pointed out that would Ali be found guilty as a possible draft dodger and sent to jail, then The Ring would strip him of his title. Nino Benvenuti was named fighter of the month for his excellent performance in taking the middleweight championship from Emile Griffith. This bout stirred up a controversy. In New York State, a rule forbids return bouts. However, for the Benvenuti-Griffith match, a return clause was agreed upon by the managers of the fighters, although not by the state athletic commission. Fleischer stepped in, arguing in favor of allowing some leeway, in the interpretation of the rules on the ground that world titles should be prevented from leaving the US.



10 YEARS AGO

JULY 1972: MUHAMMAD ALI KEPT BUSY BY FIGHTING twice. In Japan, Ali looking for a rematch with Joe Frazier, 'Waltzed' through 15 rounds with Mac Foster, and in Vancouver, defeated Canadian George Chuvalo, who for the second time, went the distance with the former champion. The editors were busy speculating on a rematch between Ali and Joe Frazier. Dan Daniel felt that the bout would not occur before 1973. Daniel believed that Frazier, who was fighting non-contenders of the likes of Terry Daniels and Ron Stander, was not really interested in fighting Ali, but instead of improving his nightclub act. Bob Foster was named fighter of the month for his stoppage of WBA light-heavyweight champion, Vincente Rondon. Foster, the true titleholder, bombed the so-called champion is 2:55 of the second round. Foster, a great light-heavyweight was toying with the idea of jumping to the heavyweight division, where he had little success in the past.



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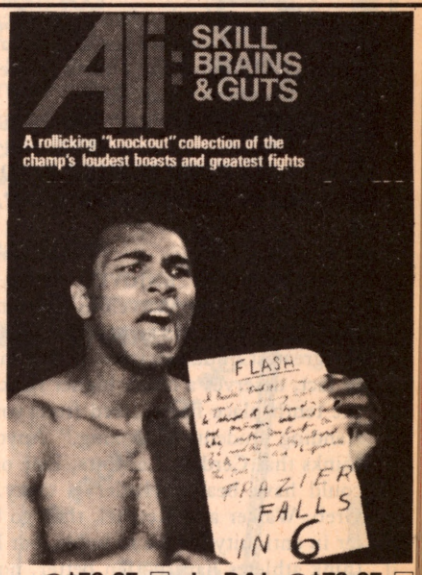

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COME OUT WRITING

AN OLE FOR RING

RING MAGAZINE'S ARTICLE ON "THE emergence of the Hispanic Fighter" by Jose Torres is a tribute to those great Latin fighters I feel has been long ovedrdue. I commend *Ring* for its giving honor where honor is due. I am a writer and this article has given me the incentive to write a documentary about five of the greatest Latin boxers.

I feel these boxers are not only a credit to their race but five of the greatest boxers of all time. I feel because these men are not American and spoke broken English—or no English at all—that they have not been given their just due; these five are: Roberto Duran, Alexis Arguello, Carlos Monzon, Wilfredo Benitez, and Jose Napoles. These men are not only popular among boxing fans everywhere but in their countries they are just as popular as Muhammad Ali—and their records are just as great, if not better than Ali's.

TONY NAVARRO, SAN JOSE, CALIF.

MARVIN IS JUST TOO MARVELOUS FOR WORDS

I VERY MUCH ENJOYED YOUR SHOWcase article on Marvelous Marvin Hagler in the May *Ring*. He is most certainly "one of the greatest middleweights of all time," and, in fact, deserves a much higher ranking than the tenth place he received from your "outstanding students of boxing." Anyone who thinks that Cerdan, LaMotta, Zale or Basilio could have beaten Hagler is crazy. As for Greb, Walker and Ketchel, they go back too far in antiquity for me to judge, but I tend to think athletes have gotten better, not worse, over the last sixty years.

In my book, Robinson, Monzon and Hagler are at the top of the middleweight list, and Marvelous Marv would have given Monzon the toughest test of his life if they had fought five years ago, while Monzon still reigned as champ. After Marvin knocks off Leonard, Hearns, Sibson, Ramos and the other pretenders, his place as a boxing immortal will be assured.

PAUL FISHER, SACRAMENTO, CA.

I LIKE YOUR RATINGS, BUD ARE THEY "GENUINE"?

WHILE I HOLD THE RATINGS OF THE WBC and the WBA with about as much respect as does a crow for an aluminum pie plate, and consider *The Ring*'s ratings as the "genuine" truth—"genuine" being the very word written in bold bright letters on both sides of each ratings poster—I must question the "genuine" ratings just this once.

In the April issue you listed Curtis Parker as the number seven-ranked middleweight, a just and fair position, though I am inclined to feel it was one or two rankings low. But now I am puzzled to find that in the May issue you have seen fit to demote him way down to fourteenth. How can this be? Is this drastic demotion a response to the recent slugfest II with Mustapha Hamsho (No. 3-ranked), who, once again, eeked out a slim decision? Is it that Hearns and Seales and Curto are finally fighting again . . . and winning? What I'm really asking is, why Curtis Parker? Because to me, Curtis Parker represents a stalwart figure in the middleweight division. Though he's lost only three bouts—twice to Hamsho and once to Davison—he is a tenacious powerhouse who has never been on the canvas, never been hurt—and will never likely be in my opinion. He is the type of fighter one would term, "a spoiler." Put him in with a Tony Sibson or a Frank Fletcher or a Fully Obel and the odds are he'd take 'em out.

Most upsetting to me, however, is that I see the candy-coated matinee twins like Alex Ramos and Bobby Czyz sliding right on by the likes of a Curtis Parker in the rankings, never having to wake up in the middle of the night holding their unblemished faces in the nightmarish thought of stepping into the ring with this bull of a man.

So what's the big idea? Why do you wish to belie the well-established verisimilitude of your ratings by promoting undeserving fighters at the expense of the deserving? Is there a bit of the old popularity contest involved? Please hurry and supply me with a "genuine" answer.

RICH HORAN, POUND RIDGE, N.Y.

ED NOTE: As George Gershwin once said, "It ain't necessarily so" . . . that Curtis Parker has only lost three times, he also lost to Wilfred Scypion. But that begs the question. The fact is that the Ring Ratings are not a popularity contest, they are the subjective determination of fifty tried and true experts from around the world who assess a fighter's worth. "Genuinely."

FIRST I'D JUST LIKE TO SAY THAT *THE Ring* is the best boxing magazine around and it is the antics of the WBC and WBA which are ruining boxing. However, what we don't need is another world champion in the Junior Middleweight division! Since the days of Henry Armstrong nobody has been able to hold two crowns at once. The great Sugar Ray Leonard should be no different from Robinson, Basilio, Griffith. Bodies like the WAA make matters worse. Please, don't take attention of the powers-that-be by joining in the championship free-for-all by recognizing Sugar Ray outside his own division.

DAVE WHITE, ENGLAND

ED NOTE: Despite the WBA's hasty stripping of Leonard's hard-won Junior Middleweight title—June 25, 1981 against Auyb Kalule—without the benefit of any such rule allowing them to do so, The Ring recognizes Leonard as the Junior Middleweight champ. And will continue to do so until June 25, 1982.

A TRAINER IN TRAINING

I REFER TO YOUR ARTICLE "WHERE have all the trainers gone . . ." in the November 1981 issue and find the remarks made by Sandy Saddler about those ". . . people showing kids how to fight who never fought themselves" very unfair and out of place.

I am a 20-year-old trainer myself and I would like to ask Mr. Saddler what he thinks of Terry Lawless, the very successful British trainer, who looked after and coached three world champions: Jim Watt, John Stracey, and Maurice Hope? Mr. Lawless never fought—as far as I know—but I reckon he's the best trainer in the world; better than you, Mr. Saddler. You don't have to be a world champion boxer to show boxers how to fight. All you need is an eye and understanding for training fighters, some common sense and plenty of patience.

I fought for seven years from ten to seventeen, but I prefer showing others how to fight than fighting. I have read all about Mr. Saddler and he was a very worthy world cham-

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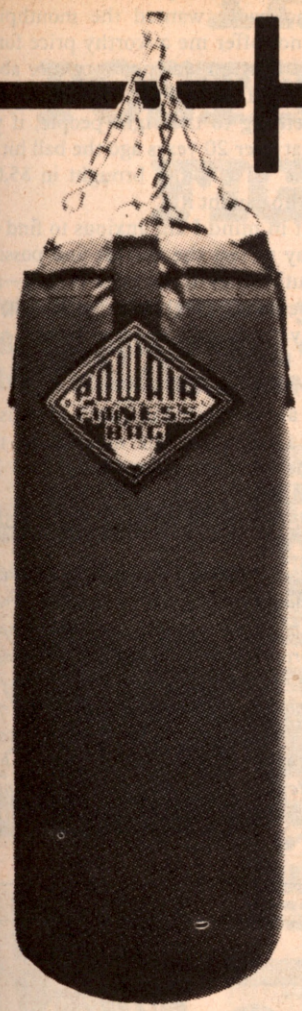

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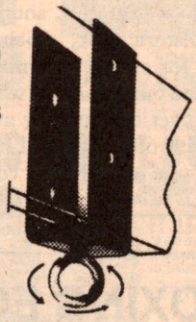

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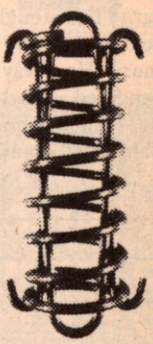

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pion. But when it comes to training fighters, I know I can do as good a job as him, if not better. I'm learning all the time, but Mr. Saddler has stopped learning. He is foolish to criticize other lesser known trainers for what they do. One day he may learn again and understand my anger.

DEREK BURNS, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND

VITO—A CUT ABOVE THE REST

VERY FEW THINGS THAT I HAVE READ in *The Ring* have gotten me angry so I feel I must speak out on this occasion.

In your May issue there was an article about Marvin Hagler which was written by George Kimball. In the article Mr. Kimball referred to Vito Antuofermo as having been a "washed up" fighter.

In my opinion this was a cheap shot that cannot be overlooked. Mr. Kimball, through this one remark, has shown me that he lacks integrity and knowledge of the sport. I will never accept with confidence any more articles that I may read by him.

Vito Antuofermo through his heart and integrity has brought more honor to the sport of boxing than any other champion in recent memory. He always came to fight and never surrendered an inch.

Mr. Kimball should write the facts and not his fabricated opinions.

ANTHONY DI MARCO, PHILA., PA.

A CASE WHERE POSSESSION IS NOT FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE LAW

LAST SEPTEMBER 16TH, I WAS IN ATtendance at the Leonard-Hearns fight. By the time the main event started I was ringside, sitting alongside Don Thibodeaux, one of Hearns' trainers. I watched the fight there for the first two rounds until Don told me that I was getting in the way, so I moved over and sat in the front row of the press section.

I went to the fight rooting for Thomas Hearns so, of course, I was disappointed. But before I left for Las Vegas I had told all my friends that when Hearns won I would be the first person in the ring and they would all see me on TV. Right after the fight ended—on a negative note for me—I realized that I still had a mission to complete. So I jumped through the ropes unnoticed and walked over to where Leonard and his people were enjoying the fruits of their victory when all of a sudden Sugar Ray Leonard's mouthpiece just dropped out of his mouth and fell to the canvas. I stared at it for about one second I realized that no one else saw it. I knew that all I had to do was grab it, and I would have myself an historic relic; which I did. I stayed in the ring for a good five minutes more until I was kicked out, but I had what I wanted.

Well, over the last few months I have had quite a few offers which I have declined, and while I was attending a couple of fights in Phoenix I spoke with Janks Morton, Ray's trainer, who badly wanted the mouthpiece but would not offer me a worthy price for it. In fact, Mr. Morton was not very nice about the situation. I know this mouthpiece is worth something to the right people, if you consider that over 20 years ago the ball hit for Roger Maris' 61st homer brought in $5,000 to the kid who caught it.

With that in mind I am anxious to find out the best way to test the market and possibly sell the mouthpiece—if the price is right—and because I personally feel that *The Ring* is the most widely read and respected boxing publication in boxing circles, I am taking the liberty of writing to you.

So if you are interested in either advertising or finding a buyer for the mouthpiece, that will give me the right price, I will give *The Ring* 15% of whatever the total amount is.

J. FREEDMAN, W. BLOOMFIELD, MICH.

ED NOTE: We will not dignify this letter with any more than our observation that Mr. Freedman is, at best, a trespasser and that someone who takes property while acting in that capacity can be held to be a thief. Moreover, if we ever see Mr. Freedman in the press section we will personally see to it that he is forcibly evacuated—something Hearns' corner should have done since he was, in his own words, "getting in the way," and may have cost his own warrior the fight. □

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q Is 25 too old to begin boxing?
—BRYAN GILE

A *With rare exception, yes.*

Q Do you have any information on "Irish" Johnny Taylor?
—ERNIE YOUNG

A *Taylor, whose real name was George Hayes, was a welter who boxed out of Oakland, Calif. from 1940 through 1946, compiling a 21-33-7 mark with nine kayo wins. His greatest moment came on June 4, 1941, when he received a 10-round verdict over Earl Turner. Taylor was knocked out 16 times.*

Q What did Billy Conn weigh for his first fight with Joe Louis?
—JUAN ROMANO

A *Conn came in at 174 against 199½ for Louis.*

Q How many times has Larry Holmes been floored as a professional?
—TOM KINGMAN

A *Thrice. Kevin Isaac put him down in Cleveland on November 28, 1973 Earnie Shavers decked him in their WBC title bout, September 28, 1979, and Renaldo Snipes floored Holmes during their title bout last November.*

Q A fighter named Andre Anderson was Dempsey's first opponent in the east in 1916. Could you print Andre's complete record for that year?
—RUDOLPH SCHWARTZ

A *This is the best I can do:*

Feb. 11	Bob Devere	New York	KO	3
Feb. 17	George Rodel	New York	KO	5
Feb. 19	Willie Meehan	New York	ND	10
Mar. 4	Jack Keating	New York	ND	10
Apr. 15	Charley Weinert	New York	KO by	2
May 24	Bill Brennan	Providence	D	12
June 24	Jack Dempsey	New York	ND	10
Oct. 27	Fred Fulton	Eau Claire	KO by	1

Q Who, besides Archie Moore, has scored the most kayoes?
—ALAN FELDMAN

A *The top 10 as it appears in the current (1982) edition of the* Ring Record Book: *Archie Moore-145, Young Eddie Williams-139, Young Stribling-126, Sugar Ray Robinson-109, Banty Lewis-108, Sandy Saddler-103, Sam Langford-102, Jimmy Wilde-101, Henry Armstrong-98, Fred Galiana-91.*

Q What did Jess Willard weigh towards the end of his career?
—JAY HOLDEN

A *For Jack Johnson, he weighed 230 pounds. Jess was 225 pounds for Frank Moran, 245 for Dempsey, 245 for Floyd Johnson, and 242 for Luis Firpo.*

Q Is there any way to obtain up-to-the-minute fight results?
—ED COHEN

A *Let your local paper know you want them to publish fight news. And continue reading* The Ring.

Q Was Joe Louis ever knocked out as an amateur?
—JOHNNY HENDRIX

A *No.*

Q You recently ran a list of the all-time greatest non-champs. Don't you think Young Stribling should have been in there?
—JIMMY CANFIELD

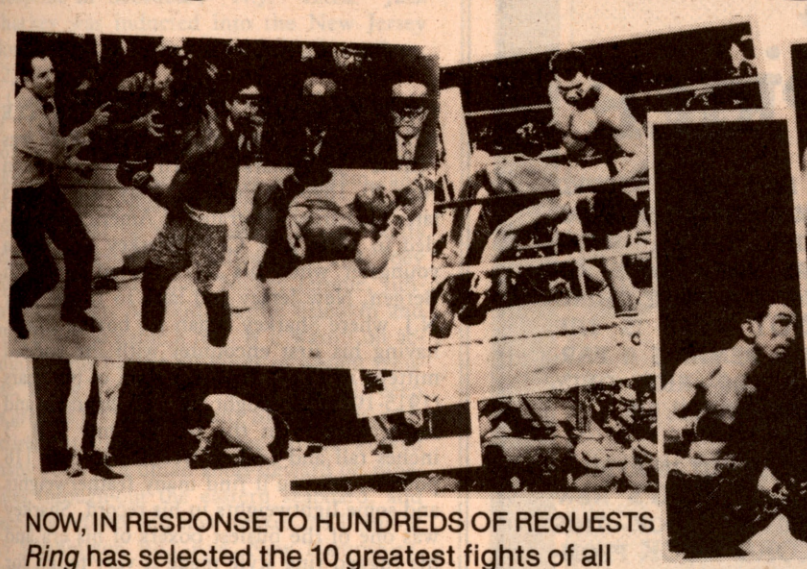
A *Yes. Forgive the obvious oversight.*

Q Who was known as the "Joplin Ghost?"
—HARRY KLAUS

A *Jeff Clarke.*

HERBERT G. GOLDMAN

THE TEN GREATEST FIGHT PHOTOS...



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- ☐ Johnson, Jack
- ☐ Liston, Sonny
- ☐ Louis, Joe
- ☐ Marciano, Rocky
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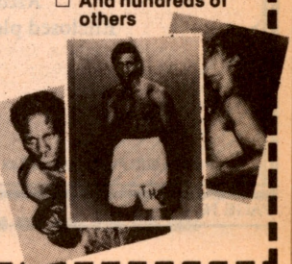

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VETERAN BOXERS'

ONE OF THE GREATEST LITTLE fighters ever to come out of New Jersey was "Little" Jack Sharkey. Born Julio Cervati, on June 20, 1898, in Bologna, Italy. A few years later his parents migrated to America and settled in New York City. Sharkey was just a youngster when his folks moved to North Bergen, New Jersey and later to Union City N.J. where Sharkey began his boxing career, having his first encounter with the padded mittens in 1915. Within a span of ten years (1915-1925) he fought the best bantams and featherweights in the world. Only 5 ft. 3 inches tall and seldom weighed in over 118 pounds, yet you'll find many featherweights and some lightweights in his record. Sharkey was one of the busiest boxers of his era and his rugged ring style made it very tough for the likes of Pal Moore (11 times), Jabez White (7 times), Frankie Burns (6 times), Joe Lynch (6 times), Pete Herman (5 times), Joe Burman (3 times), Midget Smith (3 times), Irish Johnny Curtin (twice), Young Zulu Kid (twice), Johnny Buff (twice), Kid Williams (3 times), and also great men like: Jimmy Wilde, Johnny Dundee, Charlie Ledoux, Johnny Coulon, Pepper Martin, Benny Coster, Young Solsberg, Sammy Nable, Patsy Wallace, Terry Martin, Harold Farese, Frankie Mason, Roy Moore, and Abe Friedman among others. On Nov. 10, 1921, he fought Johnny Buff for the world's bantamweight title and lost a 15 round decision in New York City. The following year, on June 6th, he also lost a 15 round bout to Johnny Dundee for the junior lightweight title, also in New York City. But the bout that stands out most of all was the one with Joe Lynch in the old Garden on Dec. 2nd, 1920. This bout was stopped by the referee, with a few seconds to go in the fifteenth and last round, on account of a badly cut eye, which Sharkey sustained early in the bout. This fight was a slugfest from beginning to end, which made it one of the most memorable bouts ever staged in the old Garden. After retiring Sharkey was a habitual figure at the Madison Square Garden, and in 1932 he opened up a tavern on 50th Street between Eighth and Broadway in New York called the Sportsman Tavern. His

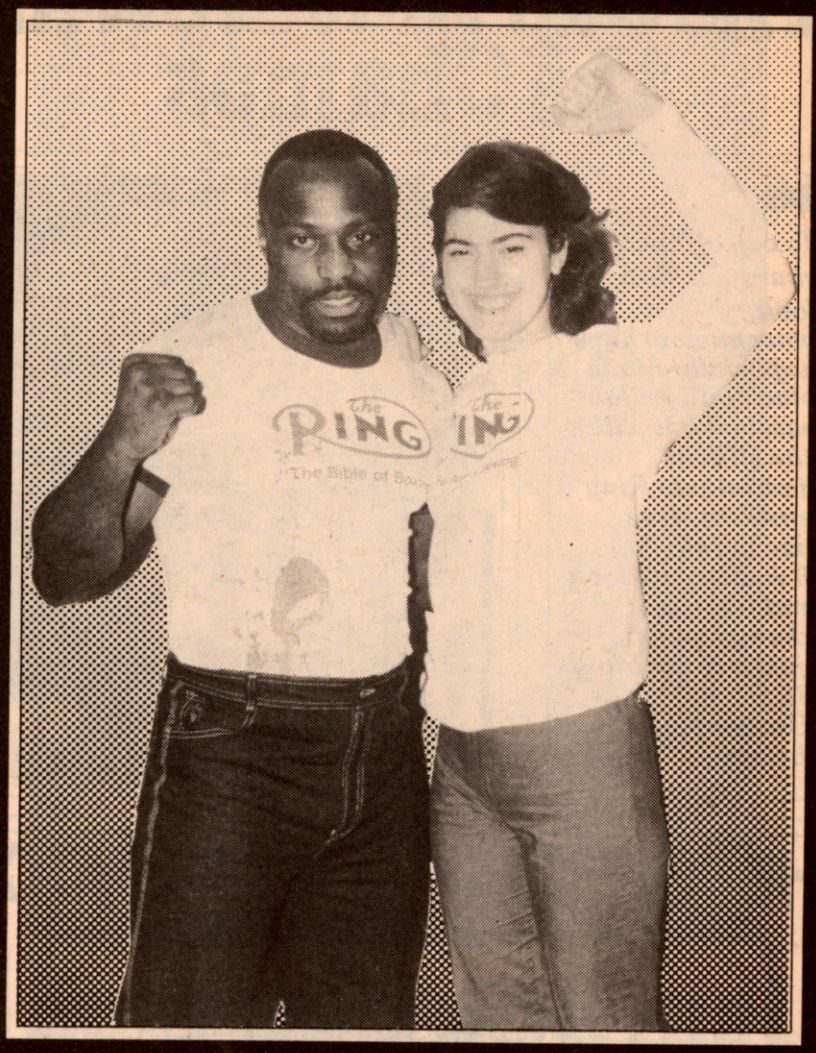
health failing, Sharkey passed away at the age of 72 years old in 1970, at the Meadowview Hospital in Secaucus, N.J. "Little" Jack Sharkey was inducted into the New Jersey Boxing Hall of Fame, posthumously on Sept. 12, 1971.

Guiseppe Cervati, Jack's son took the name of "Young" Jack Sharkey, when he started to box in the mid-thirties. The young Sharkey like his dad, started out as a bantam, and wound up as a featherweight. In the years of 1936 to 1941 he fought some 75 odd bouts with the likes of: Lou Salica, Al Davis, Joey Fontana, Harold Valan, Nickey Jerome, Jimmy Lancaster, Al Reid, Bernie Friedkin and Phil Baker to name a few. If it wasn't on account of his having all kinds of weight trouble, Young Jack Sharkey would probably been as great as his father. Young Sharkey, after his retirement from the squared circle, worked many years as a union shop-steward on pipelines through-out the eastern seaboard, and recently retired and now makes his home at 65 Washington Rd., Rye, New Hampshire. 03870.

On May 9th, The Veteran Boxers Association Ring I of Philadelphia, conducted their 47th annual Mother's Day Banquet at Palumbo's in Philadelphia. The following were inducted into their Hall of Fame: Frank "Blinky" Palermo, Charlie Santore and Nunzio Carto. Mrs. Irene Morgano was honored as "Mother of the Year" . . . Steve Kronis, one-time promising Boston lightweight prospect of the '40s who never quite made it, joined the merchant marines after quitting the fite game. He made many trips to Greece and decided this was the country he wanted to retire in. Although he has another ten years to go he recently relocated his family in the land of Helenic power, "Good Luck Steve" . . .

The New Jersey Boxing Hall of Fame inductees for the year 1982 are as follows: Boxers:—Chuck Wepner, Mickey Greb, Jack Reno, Dave Chacon, Benny Gualamo and Mickey Summers. Contributions to the sport of Boxing:—Augie Lio, sports-writer; Larry Levanstein, historian; Benny Novellino, manager-trainer; Charles Gellman, medical director; and Ray Hoagland, secretary of the N.J. USAABF; Posthumously,—Ed Brennan, former boxing writer for the Jersey *Journal,* New York *Journal-American,* and also the Ass't Editor for *Ring* Magazine; Mike Stein, former past president of Union County Boxers Assoc. and Benny Rubin, fight promoter

CHARLIE SPINA



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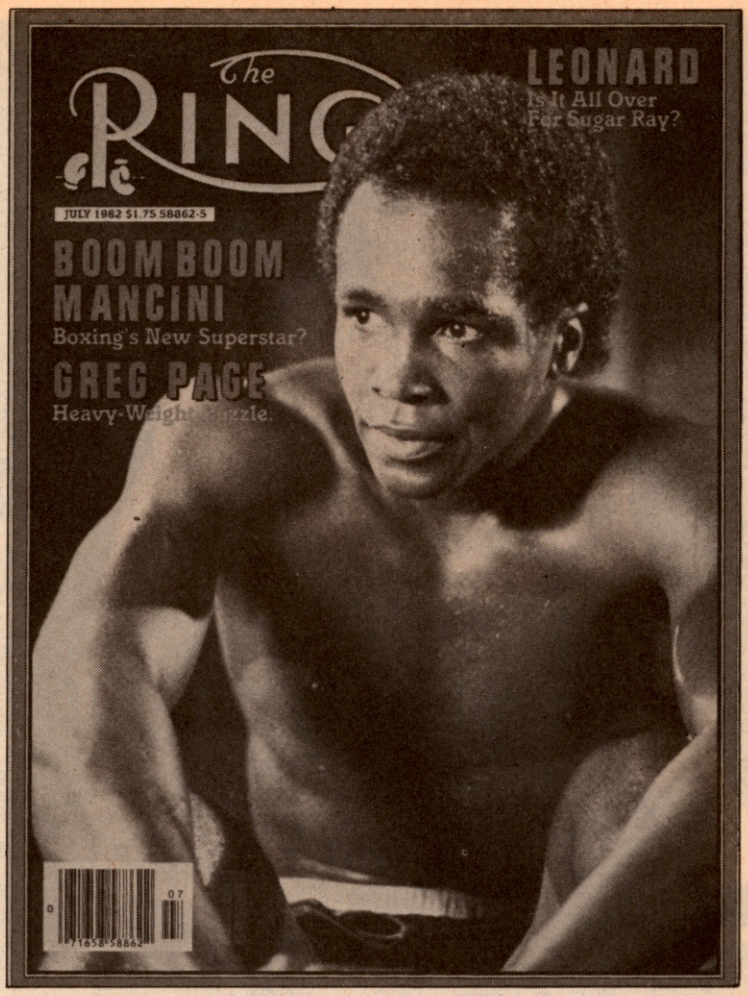

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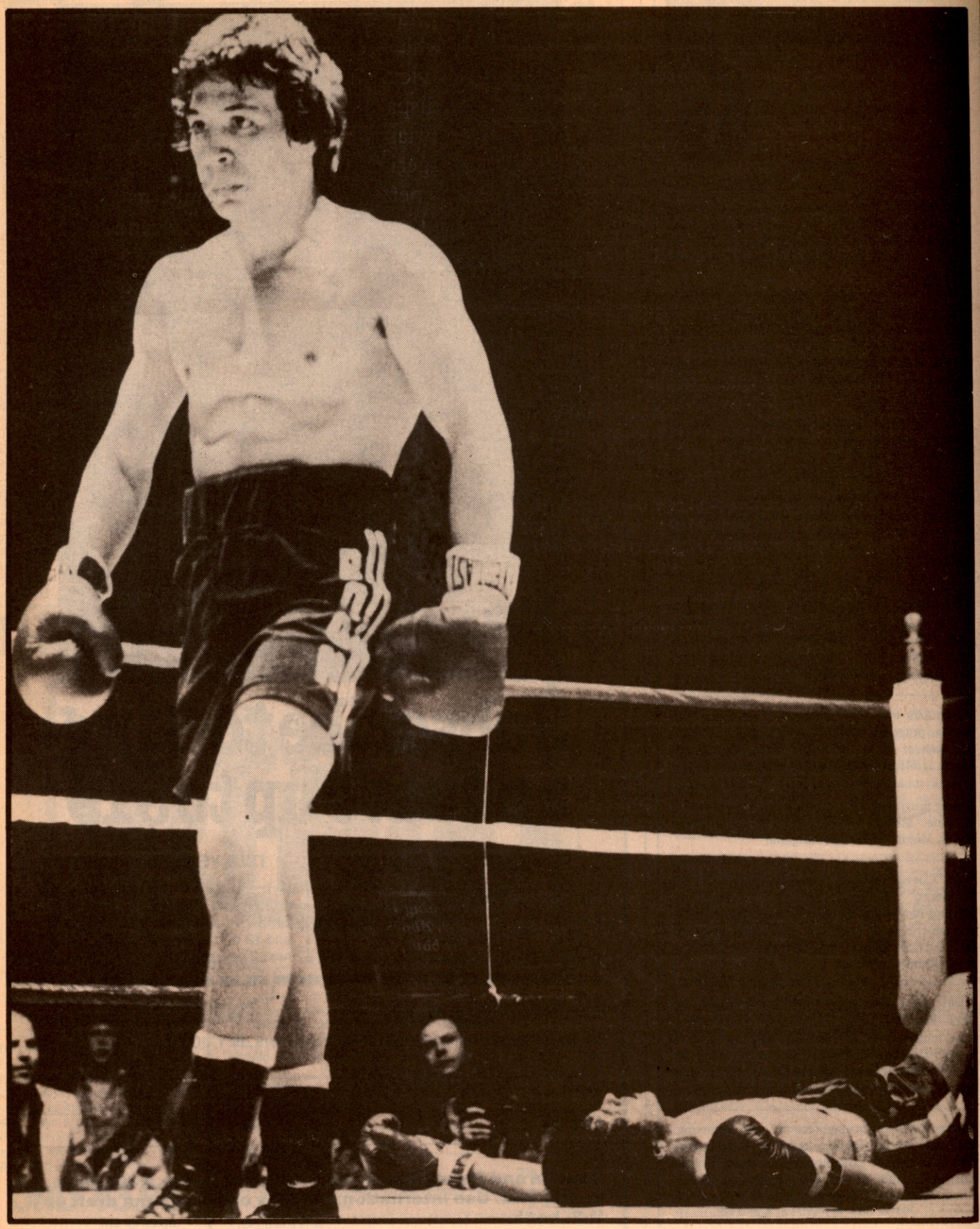
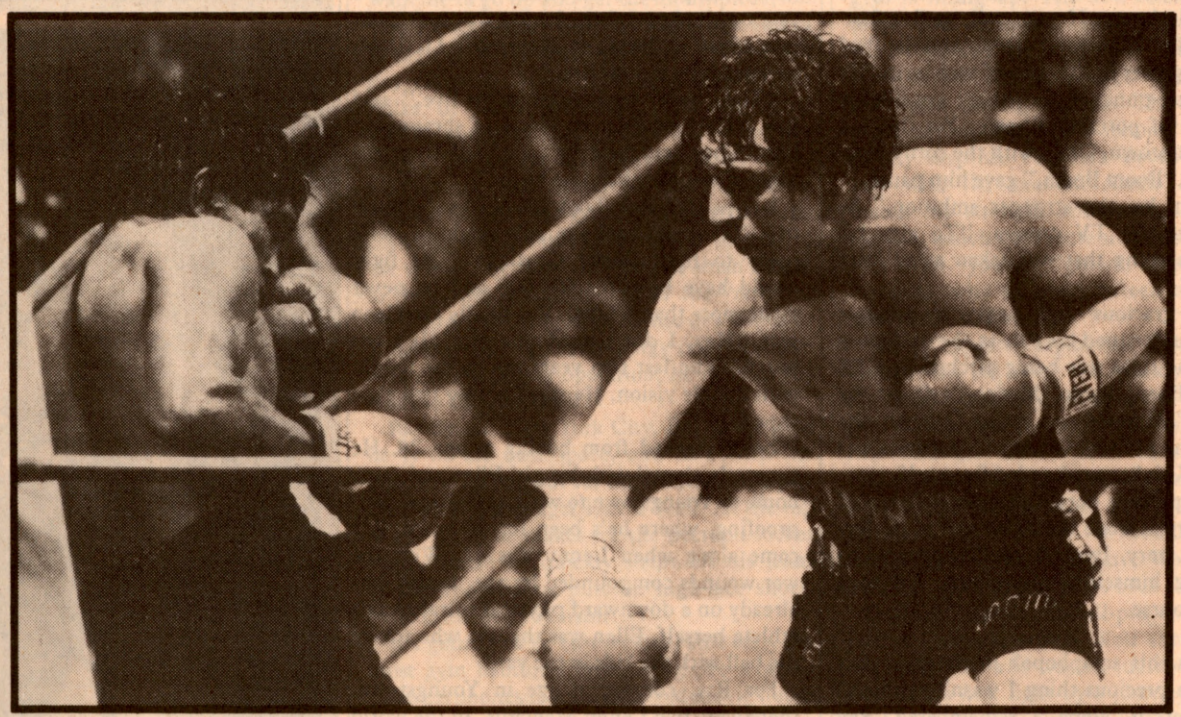


ON MAY 8, Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini took the WBA Lightweight title from Arturo Frias, who'd won the crown four months earlier and was defending it for the second time. Mancini's victory was not unexpected. In fact, he'd been the 4-1 favorite. What *was* a surprise was the dispatch with which he turned the champion out. The fight went less than one round—with Frias starting fast, making determined use of his greater handspeed and his right lead, even staggering the challenger, which, apparently, only served to pique Boom Boom's interest. In a performance that would have gratified another steel-town pug named Harry Greb, "The Pittsburgh Windmill," Mancini backed Frias into the ropes and overwhelmed him with two dozen unanswered blows before the referee called things to a halt. Ray Mancini was a young man in a hurry who seemed to have arrived in record time. He had, as he said, "Finally served my one purpose in life. This is it." But his route to the title had a long foreground. Above all, it included an instructive detour with the master, Alexis Arguello.

BY WILLIAM PLUMMER



Left: "Boom Boom" heads to a neutral corner after flattening Bobby Sparks in 1:26 of the first round. The bout, on April 30, 1980, raised Mancini's record to 9-0. Above: Mexican lightweight champ Jose Luis Ramirez is pinned in a corner as Mancini batters him. The bout, televised nationally on July 19, 1981, was won by Mancini on points over 12 rounds.

[THE SON ALSO RISES . . .TO THE TOP]

HOO-RAY FOR MANCINI!

Alexis Arguello, the lightweight champion from Nicaragua, was stripped down to his designer jeans and his brown-on-beige saddle shoes. He was sitting on the apron of the sparring ring that occupied three convention parlors in Bally's Park P—lace Casino Hotel in Atlantic City. He swung his legs and chatted with his entourage while awaiting further direction from the CBS sports people, who wanted something pithy on videotape about the title match with Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini. The fight was just 24 hours away.

"This fight is going to be as tough a one I ever had," he told the camera and the network's blow-by-blow man. "He is 20 and I am 29, but I am in my best condition. . . ."

Arguello numbered in a celebrated handful of men in boxing history who'd held titles in three different weight divisions. He had fought 75 times with just four losses and had stylishly survived the forbidding weather of sixteen title bouts. He was tall, at five-foot-ten, for the 135-pound class, and he had knock-out power in the snap of each wrist. He was a boxer-puncher for whom confidence was a sort of portable climate. Yet this kid from Youngstown, Ohio, with the corny nickname, this "Boom Boom," gave him pause.

"Mancini has the stronger ambition," he admitted to the TV camera. "To give his father something that was taken away from him . . . ."

Always gracious and never a dummy, Arguello understood his role in the unfolding drama. The fight was being pitched by CBS as "Ray 'Boom Boom' Mancini's Quest for the Title." Mancini was young Galahad, the title was the pilfered Grail, and Arguello was the Dark Knight, two-handed fate itself.

All the puffery notwithstanding, it would take a heart of stone not to be moved by Ray Mancini's story. Even Arguello appeared to be lending himself to the script. Up to a point, of course.

There was this scrapbopok in the attic that was such a precious thing I wasn't supposed to look at it alone," remembered Ray Mancini, sitting one evening a few weeks before the Arguello fight in the Manhattan apartment he'd inherited from former heavyweight contender Duane Bobick. "All the pages were yellow and the clips from the newspaper were crumbling. I must have been five or six and I used to sneak up to look at it. It didn't matter I couldn't read."

The scrapbook traced the career of the original "Boom Boom." Lenny Mancini, Ray's father, who cut a swath through the lightweight division in the late Thirties and early Forties, fighting the likes of Charlie Varre, Chief Crazy Horse, Billy Marquart. Lenny was a five-foot-two milling machine and a reproof to pain who broke his jaw in the opening round of his first fight but was still there at the end and victorious. He was a product of steel-girded Youngstown, Ohio, who did his best work in Brooklyn, where he was awarded his *nom de guerre.* Wrote one boxing enthusiast after a typical Mancini exhibition' "Lenny is a fistic tornado, a young wildcat and a human dynamo all rolled into one."

In 1941 Lenny fought lightweight champ Sammy Angott in a non-title battle royal, with Angott taking a decision that was roundly jeered by the audience. Later in the year, after Boom Boom dispatched Dave Castilloux, the reigning Canadian, it looked as though Lenny's clamorous fans were going to get the fight they demanded: Mancini versus Angott, for real this time. Then, on January 15, 1942, while the parties were negotiating, Lenny received his draft notice from the selective service. No delay or furlough would be possible, said the Army, which was unmoved by Boom Boom's offer to donate his purse to the Allied couase. After a year on the home font, Lenny was sent overseas where in Metz, on November 11, 1944, he was hit by mortar fire.

"They never expected him to live," said Ray. "He hasd thirteen pieces of shrapnel in him. They said he'd be paralyzed from the waist down. So what does he do?"

Ray paused and shook his head in admiration. "he comes back a middleweight in 1946, ready to fight Rocky Graziano. The fight would have been for $27,000 and he never made more than $5,000. But finally Graziano says, 'Hey, I don't need this guy. He's too tough!' The last two years my father fought with double vision. He was fighting two guys at once."

Lenny retired from boxing at age 28. He promptly eloped with his girl Ellen and came home to Youngstown to work at General Fireproofing, where he's been for 30 years. Ray came along when Lenny was 42. With the war wounds compounded by age, Lenny was already on a downward physical spiral. A fair athlete herself, Ellen was the one who tossed the ball with the kids in the yard.

For Ray, coming of age in Youngstown, there were two Lenny Mancinis. In the world of getting-and-spending, his father was a gimpy, partly blind, decidedly marginal man who labored in a foundry pushing barges around. But in another, more hospitable realm, Lenny was a king in exile. Everyone in Youngstown called him Boom Boom, the Uncrowned Champ. "You had to see the way people looked at him when we went down the street," remembered Ray. "I used to be amazed at the way people worshipped him."

At age thirteen Ray wrote Lenny a Father's Day poem, "I Walk in Your Shadow." Four stanzas long, it is not likely to be widely anthologized, but reading it that day reduced Lenny Mancini to a soggy mess. At age fifteen Ray abruptly announced that he wanted to train for the Junior Olympics. He'd intimated an interest, especially when Lenny, Jr., trained for the Golden Gloves. But no one was quite prared for his entry into boxing. It wasn't as if he couldn't do anything else: he was a top student, president of his class at Cardinal Mooney High School, a gifted athlete who lettered in three sports.

Apparently, no one had read the poem he wrote at age thirteen with proper attention, especially the lines, "I want to feel this man's pains./I want to be locked in this man's chain's./ . . . and live with his great name." No one saw that Ray meant to actually revive and inhabit Lenny's early life, that he meant to rewrite as comedy the tragic conclusion of the scrapbook in the attic.

Sitting in his hand-me-down Manhattan apartment, Ray remembered that for his first fight he wore his father's trunks and shoes. He remembered his mother asking, with her usual leavening wit, "Gosh, Ray. Do you want me to go up and get the mouthpiece, too?" The Times Square Gym is located just east of Broadway on Forty-second Street. To get to it Ray takes the Seventh Avenue subway. He walks in from Broadway, past the serial jewelry and shoe shops, past the 25-cent racy shows, the theater marquees droning, "New SEXtacular, SEXciting, SEXational LOVE Acts on Stage." He gives forced berth to the crowd-swollen, three-card monte games, to the vendors of parachute bags or shish kebab, to the winking solicitations of the "check it out" boys gesturing the promise of a dance or a massage through some dingy dorway. Hard by a check-cashing operation, he mounts the stairs to the gym itself.

Ray detests New York City. But in the gym he is in his own space, and he's with the people who look out for him, trainer Murphy Griffith and manager David Wolf. At the top of the stairs he makes for the decrepit locker room, where he quickly strips off his jeans and cowboy boots, puts on high-lace shoes, trunks, hooded sweatshirt.

It's getting to be two o'clock, still early for most gym habitues. One young pro wearing radio earphones is sunk in an old movie house chair by the window. Two others shadowbox before the floor-to-ceiling mirrors. A midtown business-man in an NYU T-shirt is pursuing a somewhat masochistic late-lunch hour session with the street-smart resident trainer who runs the gym.

Nods all around, Ray drifts over to the training table to begin his tutelage under Murphy Griffith. The latter is a 60-year-old West Indian with a washboard midriff who might have been tagged "Kid Chocolate" in his day. He and Ray scarcely speak but simply ease into the daily ritual. Ray has been up since 6 A.M. He was out at 6:20 doing four miles of roadwork in Central Park. At eight o'clock he was fixing his own breakfast: cream of wheat with skim milk, fruit, a glass of orange juice laced with honey or, for variety, two or three poached eggs, especially when fight day draws near. After breakfast (he eats no lunch), he half-napped, half-listened to his favorite "funk," The Commodores, Rick James, Earth Wind & Fire. Then he was off to the gym to toil until 4:30, followed by dinner at the Argo Restaurant on Columbus Avenue, an evening studying fights on videotape and taps at ten.

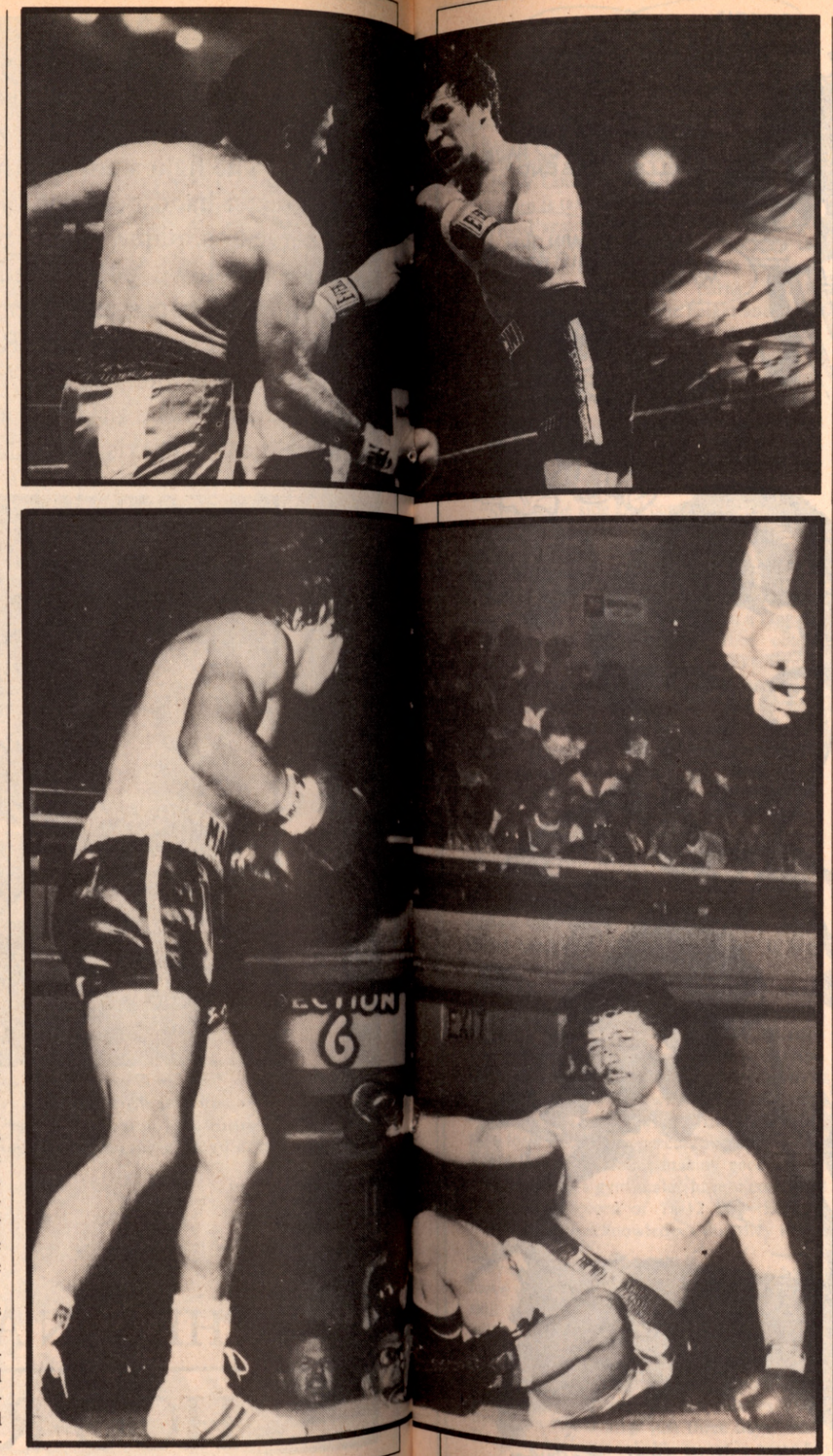
It is quiet now in the gym, but for the slap of the jump rope and the resident trainer's occasional barb aimed at the profusely sweating businessman. Then, a new arrival, a fledgling fan, happens to notice Griffith wrapping Boom Boom's hands and can't help exclaiming, "What's that you're taping on the knuckles?"

"A sanitary napkin," says Ray, matter-of-factly.

"Really?" asks the fan.

By the time Boom Boom is ready to spar, the gym is filling up. The new talent is mainly black and Hispanic. But interspersed are snow-topped pugs who knew Lenny in his glory, as well as a handful of "gym lawyers," self-styled boxing experts. The latter have come to see the new "fenom." They are mostly skeptical of Boom Boom's ability to stay with the vaunted Alexis Arguelo, to match his strength and savvy in the later rounds, which constitute unexplored country for most young fighters, especially for Mancini, who numbers fifteen early knockouts in his 20-0 record.

Some "experts" argue that Dave Wolf has brought his kid along too quickly—this even though Ray soundly defeated the number-six and the number-three contenders in his last two outings. Others are convinced that Mancini is purely a "media creation." The story of Ray and his father strikes them as suspiciously made-for-TV. It wouldn't be the first time, they say, that Dave Wolf packaged a fighter. A couple of years back there was Ed "Too Tall" Jones, the all-pro end from the Dallas Cowboys whom Wolf show-cased on television and who was set ludicrously on his duff in his first fight by a journeyman-opponent half his size. To some in the fight establishment, Wolf is a slick interloper. Indeed, he is a far cry from the managerial stereotype, the gentrified hood with a cigar in his kisser. Urbane, articulate, on the beefy side, Wolf is a former sports editor of *Life* who backed into the game through friendships with Bobick and Joe Frazier. Just entering the gym, he is



Mancini lands a right to the body of defending NABF lightweight king Jorge Morales during their NABF title bout on May 16, 1981 (above left). Mancini stopped Morales at the end of the ninth round. Bobby Plegge heads for the floor (left) after a Mancini left hook. Plegge was stopped in the sixth round, October 28, 1980.

THE SUCCESS STORY OF LENNY "BOOM BOOM" MANCINI, AWAITING A LIGHTWEIGHT TITLE SHOT, WAS ABRUPTLY INTERRUPTED...
SLAM
SORRY, BUT IN 1942 THERE'S A BIGGER FOE TO BATTLE!
... SERIOUS 1944 WAR WOUNDS SHOULD HAVE SPELLED "THE END"... EXCEPT...
"I'M GOING TO WIN THE CHAMPIONSHIP FOR MY DAD!
"THE BOOM BOOM MANCINI STORY"
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RAY "BOOM BOOM" MANCINI, A CARBON COPY OF HIS FATHER, BLASTED HIS WAY THROUGH THE LIGHTWEIGHT RANKS!
20 STRAIGHT
FOE
"BRING BACK THE DRAFT!
THEN RAY GOT HIS TITLE SHOT AND SOME HARSH EDITING FROM W.B.C. RULER, ALEXIS ARGUELLO!
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OUCH!
AGAIN, IT COULD HAVE BEEN "THE END"... BUT TWO WINS AND ONE ROUND LATER ARTURO FRIAS WAS AN EX-CHAMPION.
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CHARLIE McGILL ~ THE RING ~

himself eager to assess Ray over a distance. Today Boom Boom will go fifteen rounds with four different sparring partners.

"Move your head, side to side. Dip, dip, bend those legs," coaches Murphy Griffith, as Ray stalks a rangy white fighter. "That's it. Hands close together. Don't lunge, shorten up. Parry. Come up with the left. Good."

Griffith is taking Ray through the styles he will need against Arguello. Clearly, he will need to back the champion up, to keep the pressure so intense that Arguello's back will be ribboned with rope burns. Unlike Arguello, Mancini lacks the height and leverage to possess a true "equalizer." At five-foot-five, with a torso that vees like a flight of geese, Ray is a stiff body-puncher whose cumulative blows tend to sicken an opponent, make him hinge at the middle and offer his chin as a gift. Which is precisely what Ray's second sparring partner does. Mercifully, Ray carries the kid.

"Step to the side and come in on the angle. That's it. Get about three hooks now," says Griffith, ignoring the plight of Ray's opponents, who take turns cowering on the turnbuckle behind upraised forearms. By this time a number of fighters got-up in a range of costumes—wearing anything from cut-off wetsuits to P.J.s beneath their trunks, topped off by Tshirts saying things like "I Am A Political Prisoner"—have left off hitting the bags and are gathered at ringside, where there is general agreement that Boom Boom is one aptly named dude. In the lull between rounds, while the used sparring partner is discarded for a fresh one, the gym's resident trainer can be heard at the far end of the room where he's still working the midtown businessman. "It's like learnin' to eat proper," says the trainer, as he slaps his charge on the elbows with large, ungainly-looking gloves called handpads. "My man, you got to keep them wings down."

Boom Boom's sparring partners are decent club fighters. Phyical doubles of Arguello, they are tall, stand-up boxers who, to their visible sorrow, are scantily fleshed at the ribs. During sparring sessions, they often learn at the same time Ray does what punch or combination he will be throwing. Murphy Griffith calls for a hook or uppercut, and they watch Boom Boom setr about making good on the direction. Ray's gym mates have a combined professional record of 74-12 and they are blessed with foreknowledge. But they are in trouble.

By the time the training camp—which will move to Grossinger's, the resort in the Catskill Mountains—is concluded, Boom Boom will have done the following: Forced the lightweight champion of the Dominican Republic to bow out with a pair of broken ribs. Sent packing a twice-Golden Gloves victor from Ann Arbor after just three days' work. Required his most reliable target, a game kid from Mexico, to take to wearing a ply of foam rubber around his tender middle. So benighted another partner at the eyes he will resemble a raccoon. In short, he will have put a sizable dent in the smugness of the gym lawyers and brought a smile to Wolf's lips. The fighter Ray was as an amateur," said Dave Wolf, during a free moment at the camp in the Catskill Mountains, "bears only the slightest resemblance to the fighter he is now. He was not a devastating puncher. He was a face-first fighter, very easy to hit.

"We discovered Ray at the National Golden Gloves in 1979. I sent Griff out to Indianapolis, and he called me the first day. He said he'd found 'a little Rocky Marciano.' He tabbed Ray the best prospect out there , better than Marvis Frazier, Tony Tucker, Tony Ayala. But he also said Ray would not win the tournament. He was too aggressive, far too low to the ground. He took too many punches coming in. Plus, he was not above hitting you with a stray elbow. These were tactics that turned off the amateur judges, but they're just what you look for in a pro.

"Griff saw things in Ray that most people didn't know existed. He saw that he was effectively aggressive without really knowing what he was doing. There was no doubt that he was motivated. Most important, he had a good chin, which is God-given. Griff thought he remembered the name Mancini, another guy years ago who fought with the same headlong style."

Griffith and Wolf met Lenny soon enough. They entered into months of negotiation with the Mancini family. Some civic-minded Youngstown businessmen wanted to "buy" Ray, to set up a corporation similar to the one that underpinned Cassius Clay in the sixties. They offered him bonus money, an apartment, a car, a trumped-up job with a gratuity of $500 a week. It seemed a sweet deal, especially as Wolf and Griffith offered nothing upfront, nothing more than the usual split: the fighter gets two-thirds of the take, after expenses.

Fortunately, Ray and his parents set more store by expertise than free lunch. They revered Murphy Griffith's 40 years of experience and Dave Wolf's evident sophistication. They appreciated the two men's no-frills sincerity and trusted they would keep Ray's health uppermost in mind. Lenny Mancini made one last attempt to dissuade his son from a professional career. Remembered Ray two years later: "He told me it was a tough life, a painful life, a lonely life. But what could he say when I told him I wanted to win the title for *him*?"

What followed was the classic story of the making of a professional boxer, but with modern-day embellishment. Wolf and Griffith reconstructed their fighter virtually from the gound up. They had his body overhauled, his trapezius and abdominal muscles sculpted, his neck-size increased, through Nautilus training at the Sports Institute in New York. They employed videotape, perhaps as few had before. They watched countless tapes of illustrious fighters whose styles Ray might plagiarize. Ray studied Joe Louis's jab, Marciano's left hook, Roberto Duran's right hand, and the ring technicianship; of fighters from Tony Canzoneri to Eusebio Pedroza. The goal was to make Ray into a sort of composite fighter, to discover his own special contours in the bas relief of the great fighters of the past. They videotaped his workouts at the Times Square Gym and spent long evenings after long days, scrutinizing each sparring session. They worked especially on Ray's balance, teaching him not to overstride but to inch after his prey. They taught him to vary his "look" when coming in, to bob his head, to feint in order to draw a lead so as to counterpunch. Ray had a heart as deep as the *Ring Record Book*; what was needed was polish and a rein on his machoism.

His first professional fights were made with the utmost care. His career debut was staged in Warren, Ohio, right next door to Youngstown. Foolishly, his opponent came to the weigh-in a dozen pounds too heavy. With someone else the kid might have gotten away with the tactic, but Dave Wolf made him drop six pounds in the sauna just hours before fight time. As if that were not enough, the doomed opponent arrived the arena to discover an audience made up of 3,000 steelworkers cheering to the music of the Pat Travers Band, "Boom Boom, Out Go the Lights." Mancini stopped the kid, a vetern of several pro fights, in the first round. Ray fought his next several matches on the road—Washington, Dallas, Phoenix. In each of these shows he was on the undercard of Ed "Too Tall" Jones and was making $4,500 a go at a stage in his career when most fighters got $200. Dave Wolf's managerial savvy was in overdrive.

After the eighth fight, another one-round affair in Indianapolis, Wolf and Griffith removed Boom Boom from the fight-show circuit and whisked him to Los Angeles. Ray's development had taken even his optimistic handlers by surprise. The two men realized that Boom Boom was but a year away from fighting for the title. In California they matched him in gym after gym with the best the West Coast had to offer—Bobby Chacon, Herman Montes, et al. Ray did everyone proud.

In the spring of 1980 he won the Ohio lightweight crown. Next he knocked out the Trinidadian 135-pound champion, who was trained by Emile Griffith, Murphy's famous nephew (the fighter, unconscious for seven minutes, woke to ask, "Where have I dreamed this before?"). In his twelfth fight in Las Vegas, Ray broke his right hand in the third round and spent the next seven camou-

flaging the injury while running up points with his left. Both manager and trainer Wolf and Griffith were suitably impressed.

Through Wolf's thoughtful matchmaking and patient courtship of the WBC, Ray climbed steadily in the rankings. By the time he'd had eighteen fights he was rated among the world's top ten lightweights. He was ready, on May 16, 1981, for a large step-up in class—a fight with the WBC's sixth-rated Jorge "Kid Dynamita" Morales, a brawler with a 32-7-2 record. The fight turned out to be mostly one-sided, with Ray neutralizing Morales's right hand by moving constantly to his own right and by throwing an improbable 110 punches per round to Kid Dynamita's 65. The referee stopped matters in the ninth when he saw that Morales's left eye was ripe fruit about to go to seed.

With each fight Ray's preparation had become more and more elaborate. Wolf and Griffith obtained tapes of the opponent's most recent outings and sifted them for weakness. Wolf had people monitoring the enemy training camp who fed him intelligence on a daily basis. He learned about the opponent's health, about his roadwork and the kind of sparring his gym mates were providing. The least scrap of seemingly innocuous information might figure in the fight profile manager and trainer were drawing right up to showtime. "If I don't go into a fight knowing what a guy is weighing, what he's doing with his spare time, where his head is," said Wolf, "I'm uncomfortable."

The sources in the camp of Jose Luis Ramirez advised that the third-ranked contender from Mexico was expecting the same kind of fight on July 19 that Boom Boom had brought against Morales. The Ramirez camp was brimming with confidence. A lethal puncher whose 53-2 record included 47 knockouts, Ramirez was looking past Mancini to a rematch with Alexis Arguello, who had recently taken a controversial decision from him. Both fighters wanted the rematch—Ramirez to get his just due, Arguello to recoup his pride—and both saw Mancini as the necessary trampoline to that end. Ever alert to the main chance, Wolf leveraged Arguello's name onto a contract to take on the winner of the fight just hours before Boom Boom entered the ring with Ramirez. Wolf threatened to withdraw from the Ramirez bout if Arguello failed to sigh, knowing that it would be hard to get Alexis to fight his kid once he saw what Ray did to the Mexican strong-boy.

The fight was a masterpiece of one-upmanship. It was made near Youngstown and the arena was packed with ear-rendering Boom Boom banshees. Then, there were the details of subtle harrassment that Wolf thrives on: to wit, knowing that Latin fighters tend to wear leather-soled shoes (and Americans rubber), he made sure the canvas was especially slick and that no rosin was obtainable for miles. Above all, there was the fight plan Mancini implemented, which was the antithesis of the Killkenny brawl with Morales.

Put simply, Boom Boom came to box. He did not spray his punches like a pinwheel but paid them out in well-wrought combinations. He did not follow his prey into the ropes to bang at his ribs, but stood ring center and jabbed. Ramirez was bewildered. He'd promised his attack upon countering. But each time he uncoiled he found that Ray had come and scored and was gone.

After the ninth episode of what was clearly a shutout, Murphy Griffith leaned in from the corner and marveled at his fighter. "Where did you learn to fight like that?" he asked. "From you," answered Boom Boom. "I learned from you."

During the two years he was a contender-in-the-works, Ray sometimes felt the tariff for his progress almost more than he was willing to pay. It wasn't that girls and sex were virtually off-limits ("I don't want any girls. I'm not here for that"). It wasn't his relentlessly wholesome diet ("When I go out of training I don't eat anything that's good for me for a week"). Nor was it his Spartan training schedule and his trainer's constant effort to keep him sharp ("Griff does things. We're eating and he says, 'No, Ray. You can't have another glass of water.' I tell him I'm bored with my room and he says, 'Stay in there. I don't want you out walking around.' I know what he's doing, and why he's doing it. If you lose that edge you leave your fight in the gym").

No, what was getting to Ray was not his monastic regime. He'd signed on for that. Rather it was being 400 miles away from his family ("I can take everything else. Not seeing them kills me, but I know I couldn't train at home. Too many distractions"). It was also being in New York. He trained on perhaps the most disorienting street in the city. Equally jarring to his Midwestern-steel-town sensibilities was the trendy part of town he lived in to be near his trainer. The neighborhood, just off Columbus Avenue, seemed overrun with theme bars, glassed-in-boutiques and would-be beautiful people. Ray was an anomaly, subwaying daily between two worlds he felt no part of, who knew but three people outside his handlers in the entire town: Phyllis, who put his checks through at Chemical Bank; what's-her-name who ran the ten-items-or-less register at the Pioneer supermarket; and George at the Argo, the only restaurant for blocks where when you ordered a meat dish you got vegetables with it.

He had always been passingly religious, but anxiety and depression tilted him toward "charismatic Christianity," which was supported by his apartment mate, heavyweight boxer Randy Stephens. Lenny and Ellen Mancini were upset by their son's drifting away from traditional Catholicism, but Ray had found that his health depended upon gaining a more intimate relationship with the deity ("A year ago when my brother was killed, I don't think I could have made it without the Lord seeing me through").

Not long before the Arguello fight, the title more clearly in view, Ray was back on an even plane. In fact, there were two books on his bedside table: right next to a guide to letting Jesus into your life lay another, more traditionally Italian book, *the Last Mafioso*.

Even as Alexis Arguello was upstairs in the Atlantic City hotel stripped to the waist and addressing the TV camera, the young challenger was in the lobby toastily ensconced with his family. It was a curious sight: Ray, Lenny and Ellen Mancini, backdropped by the swirl of the casino and the chatter of the one-armed bandits, greeting the homespun troops as they arrived from Youngstown.

Lenny was in a wheelchair. Weeks earlier he had undergone a triple by-pass operation, thereby making the saga of father and son all the more poignant. He didn't really need a wheelchair. He could walk. It was a precaution—a means, perhaps, to restrain Lenny and a sign to Ray's boyhood friends not to rough-handle him out of manly affection. Nor did he, Lenny felt, need the panty-hose he hoped nobody knew he was wearing. Heck, said his confidants, Joe Namath wears them. "Joe Namath," he sniffed. But Ellen said "put them on" and put them on he did.

The CBS people were trying to get Lenny to wheel upstairs to be factored into their introductory sequence. But they had to deal through Ellen, who thought her husband should rest. She was notably immune to the magic of television. "Let's get our priorities straight," she said. "I don't care if the Pope wants to see him. He'll have to wait."

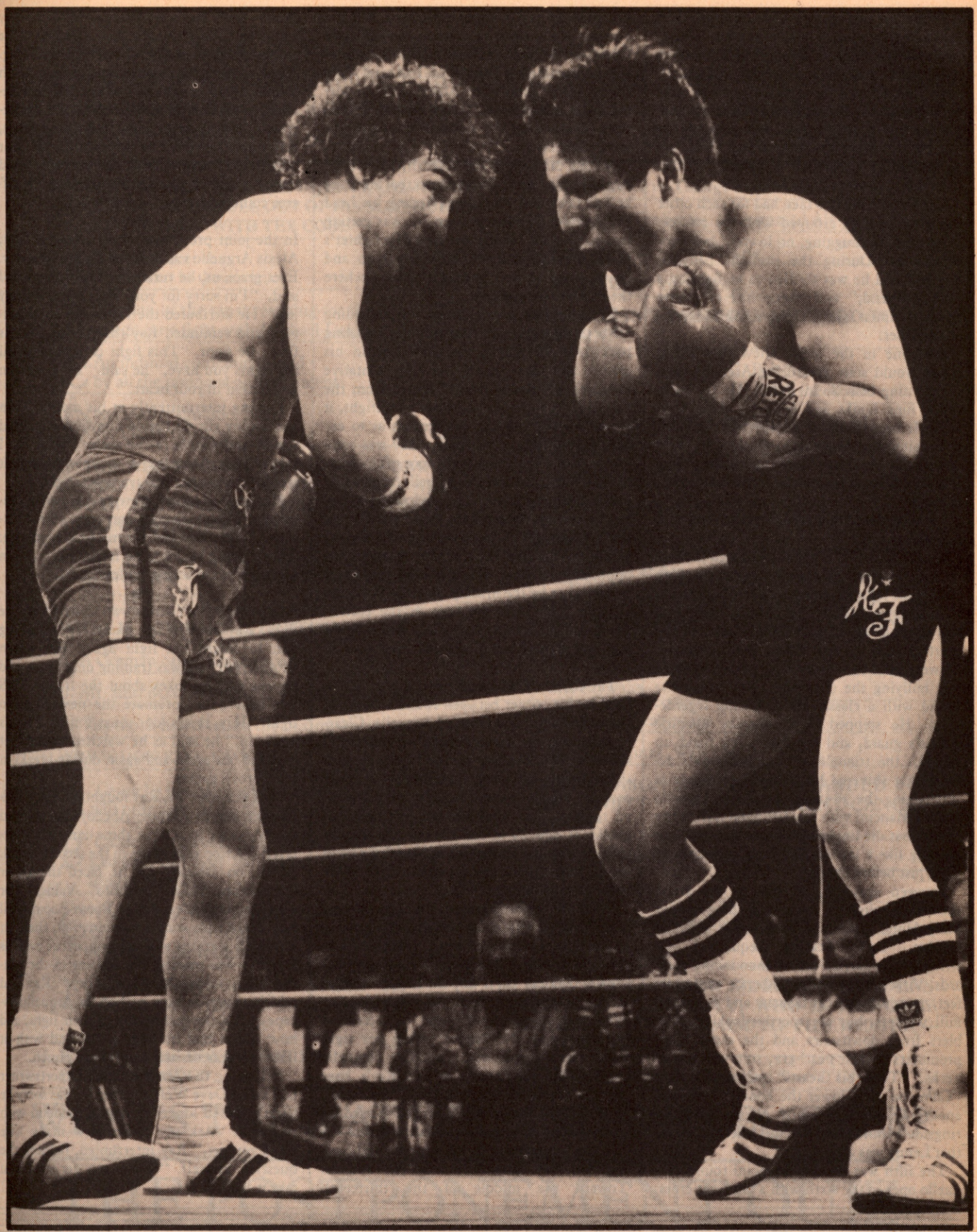
She protected him now. But she had prodded and cajoled him all week in Youngstown when he wasn't sure he was up to Atlantic City.

"Come on now," she said. "You're not going to quit on us after all Ray has done."

Answered Lenny: "We don't have no quitters in my family."

And Ellen: "Okay, then."

Saturday, October 3, 4:30 P.M. There may have been an Arguello fan or two among the 2,200 crushed into the hotel ballroom-*cum*-arena. But he, or they, wisely, embraced anonymity. The makeshift stands, which rose to the ceiling, were filled with andrenalized folk from Ohio—many of whom wore red and green T-shirts bearing Boom Boom's likeness and waved Italian flags and banners with inspirational sentiments. What with all the open-hearth plants being shut down in Youngstown, some 20,000 people (out of 100,000) had lost their jobs. Many were investing the range of their emotions in the fortunes of Ray Mancini.



HERB HERBOLSHEIMER

As the last preliminary fight began to play out, a barely audible murmur grew to particular shape: "Boom Boom," as if tattooed on a drum. Suddenly, Arguello, dressed in navy blue, slipped through the ropes to scattered boos, his color-coordinated entourage trotting his championship belt around the ring. Then Mancini vaulted into view, accompanied by a roar that was almost hurtful as he threw kisses to his public.

The respect the two men had for each other was clear as they grouped with the referee. There was no mugging, no lowrent behavior whatsoever. During the prefight ballyhoo Ray had said he was thrilled to be fighting a "living legend," and Alexis had of course honored him as a knight errant in the service of his father.

Everyone in the arena knew that Boom Boom would start pressuring Arguello with the opening bell. So he didn't. He lay back, threw long hooks and seasoned them with jabs. He kept things to a respectful dos-a-dos and waited for Arguello to disclose his own design. Clearly, Dave Wolf and Murphy Griffith were playing their usual three-dimensional chess.

"You're dead, Arguello," yelled one fan, hopefully.

In the third round Mancini started jabbing with conviction and raised a punch beneath Arguello's left eye. But he was still operating at a distance, still letting Alexis circle him and spear down at his bobbing head. In the fourth round the real Boom Boom Mancini answered the bell. Busy, busy, busy. And he was bullying the champion. Ray began the round with a classic bit of boxing legerdemain. He stepped right, thereby opening Alexis's guard, and brought a left hand up through the triangle of the champion's defense that shivered him. Suddenly, Mancini was setting the all-important pace. Arguello rocked Mancini with one left hand during the round, but the lingering tableau was of Alexis gasping like a landed fish from an overhand right just before the bell.

Between episodes, no one in the arena showed the slightest interest in the gorgeous Bally Hotel girls—one dusky, one a Rhine maiden, both wearing sequinned G-strings—who carried round-announcing placards. Virtually the entire audience was on its feet, not just the cardiganed and broganed mill workers, but the sportive-looking gamblers from downstairs and the out-of-town promoters in their pearl-gray suits and turtlenecks. "Take his heart!" yelled one fan. "Come on Ray, lower the boom!" bellowed another, while the family physician sitting ringside behind the Mancinis checked to see that Lenny was all right.

The fifth was another Mancini round. Arguello opened the sixth with a big right cross. But most of his punches were long and the overuse of the right hand in so economical a fighter as Arguello smacked of desperation. Up at Grossinger's Dave Wolf had said, "We simply aren't going to let Alexis vacation during the middle rounds." Now he and Griffith were sneaking up the stairs in the corner to wave Mancini on.

No one dictated in the seventh, but clearly Arguello was back. Ray was not boring in as he had been and Alexis was finding his head with greater frequency. Mancini was getting into bad habits. Ninety per cent of a fighter's power is gathered at the end of his reach, and Ray seemed to be camping precisely where the rain was the hardest.

By the eighth frame, sweat was cascading off both fighters, and Mancini was pedaling backwards for maybe the first time in his career. In the ninth, several tentative choruses of "Boom Boom" issued from the audience. A little like music at a bullfight, it served as much to cut the tension as to encourage the fighter. Abruptly, Ray was coming at Alexis like a revolving door off its stanchion. Then, just before the bell, he accidentally butted the champion. Midmayhem, Arguello rose up, dropped his guard and felt his eye for damage. A more experienced fighter would have seized the moment to knock his opponent senseless. But Ray, too well-bred, was stricken by the mishap. Even as Wolf and Griffith were near apoplexy in the corner, screaming for him to capitalize, Boom Boom just stood there as if wishing somehow to help.

The tenth round began with a war. Chastised by his corner between rounds, Mancini channeled his animus toward Arguello. Clearly infected, the crowd began to cheer and stamp its feet. But Ray couldn't quite stay inside Alexis's jab, even though obviously he couldn't afford to stand outside and get picked to bits. The question was whether Arguello at age 29 could endure the seesaw shifts in fortune and whether Mancini's head would bear up the the incessant rat-a-tat-tat without gauzing over.

With the eleventh round, the fight entered what is called "the championship distance," a space that is decorated with monuments to Alexis Arguello. "Pick it up. Pick it up," the crowd chanted. As if impelled, Ray charged Alexis, scored some, then was met with a terrific hook that sprayed sweat in a crescent over the ring. No longer saving his right hand, but using it with impunity. Arguello caught Mancini coming in and Ray's knee met the canvas for the first time in his career. With the bell, Boom Boom lunged toward his corner where he genuflected on the ropes.

It was a testament to his superb conditioning that Ray lasted the next two rounds. Toward the middle of the thirteenth round—with Ray's mouth showing an angry cut—Dave Wolf could be seen rising up in the corner ready to throw a towel into the ring. Then, a matter of seconds into the fourteenth round, Alexis caught Ray with a left hook behind the ear and his arms shot out like a scarecrow's. Trying desperately to embrace Alexis, Ray was boosted by an uppercut to the solar plexus and a second hook and knocked stupid into the ropes by a right hand before the referee could intercede.

■

In the joint press conference after the fight, Alexis Arguello called it the fight of the year. Ever gracious, he turned to Boom Boom and said, "I'm sorry for you, Ray. But it was my job." He attributed the victory to his experience and reminded Ray that he too lost his first title fight. "This fight is better than all the fights you have," he said. "From now on you have it in your heart."

Licking intermittently at his mouth, Ellen and Lenny sitting beside him, Ray addressed the 50-odd people in the room: "What can I say? Alexis Arguello is a super fighter. It would have been a helluva upset, right?"

He laughed, then grew to his major concern: "Fifteen rounds can seem like a lifetime. I wanted it bad for my father, you see. That's going to hurt me a lot later . . . I'm sorry if I'm not acting professional."

■

At a banquet in Youngstown shortly after the fight, Ray startled the guests by intimating that he might not fight again. But within another week he was training once more, and he was making jokes about the trailers CBS was runing to promote the next Arguello fight. "Hey, that's four times I'm on TV this weekend," he said as he watched himself get knocked out again and again during breaks in the football games.

On December 26, Ray fought an Aztec Jack Palance named Manuel Abedoy. He stopped the Mexican in one of those tantalizing delayed-reaction knockouts in the second round. Them, on January 23, he faced the clever Dominican, Julio "Diablito" Valdez. For nine rounds Vadez eluded Boom Boom until Ray dazed him with a combination, then hit him with a gratuitous right uppercut even as Diablito was making his descent to the canvas. "No more Mr. Nice Guy," Ray had said, musing on how he had let Arguello escape in the eleventh round of their fight, and how Alexis had hit him at the end with at least one unnecessary and vicious punch.

Following the Abedoy fight, a sportswriter had asked Dave Wolf whether he was sorry he hadn't waited longer to match Mancini with Arguello. "Ask my father how many title shots you get," Ray interrupted, fielding the question himself. "When you get one, you take it." □

OKAY, CLASS.

Now that the spate of injuries has caused so many recent postponements, we have before us a pop quiz designed to test just how closely you've been following the daily events. Take out your pencils and papers and see how you would do trying to make chicken salad out of the chicken droppings fed us piecemeal by the press.

BY BERT RANDOLPH SUGAR

1. QUESTION: WHAT WAS THE INJURY CLAIMED BY MIKE WEAVER TO PULL OUT OF HIS SCHEDULED WBA TITLE BOUT WITH TEX COBB?

A. Tripping over the small print in the contract ☐

B. A sprain of the wrist reaching for the pen to sign for a fight with Michael Dokes ☐

C. An induced epidemic caused by all the previous postponements ☐

D. Sympathy shoulder pains for Gerry Cooney ☐

2. IF THE WBA DECIDES TO VACATE SUGAR RAY LEONARD'S WELTERWEIGHT TITLE, WHICH TWO OF THE FOLLOWING WILL *NOT* BE PART OF AN ELIMINATION BOX-OFF?

A. Chong-Pal Park ☐ D. Kim-Il Soo ☐
B. Central Park ☐ E. Don't-Want To ☐
C. Rodrigo Sanchez ☐ F. Marvin Camel ☐

3. WHAT IS A DETACHED RETINA?

A. A German camera taken apart ☐

B. Mr. amd Mrs. Retina after a separation agreement ☐

C. The shock heard round the boxing world ☐

4. WHY IS DON KING LAUGHING?

A. 'Cause he has Michael Dokes who will next fight Mike Weaver ☐

B. 'Cause he never had control of Ray Leonard and now can annex the welterweight division ☐

C. 'Cause Bob Arum is promoting the once-postponed Marvelous Marvin Hagler-Thomas Hearns fight ☐

D. 'Cause Gerry Cooney's shoulder has shaped up while all his competitors' fights have shipped out ☐

5. WHAT WILL BE BOXING'S NEXT POSTPONEMENT?

A. Otis Elevator vs. George Steinbrenner ☐

B. Sons of Joe Frazier vs. Muhammad Ali ☐

C. Sean O'Grady vs. the Courts ☐

D. Sean O'Grady vs. Anybody ☐

6. WHO DOESN'T WANT RAY LEONARD TO RETURN?

A. The WBA ☐ C. Bob Arum ☐
B. Don King ☐ D. All of the Above ☐

7. WHO WILL SPONSOR BOXING'S NEXT POSTPONEMENT?

A. Head and Shoulders ☐

B. Johnson & Johnson's Band-Aid Division ☐

C. Bausch & Lomb ☐

D. Lloyd's of London ☐

8. WHAT DIVISION WILL EXPERIENCE THE NEXT POSTPONEMENT-CANCELLATION?

A. The welterwaits ☐

B. The Flywaits ☐

C. The Light Heavywaits ☐

D. Braniff Airlines' Wait List ☐

9. WHAT REASON WILL BE FORWARDED FOR THE NEXT POSTPONEMENT-CANCELLATION?

A. An impediment in the reach ☐

B. A joint disease ☐

C. The heartbreak of psoriasis ☐

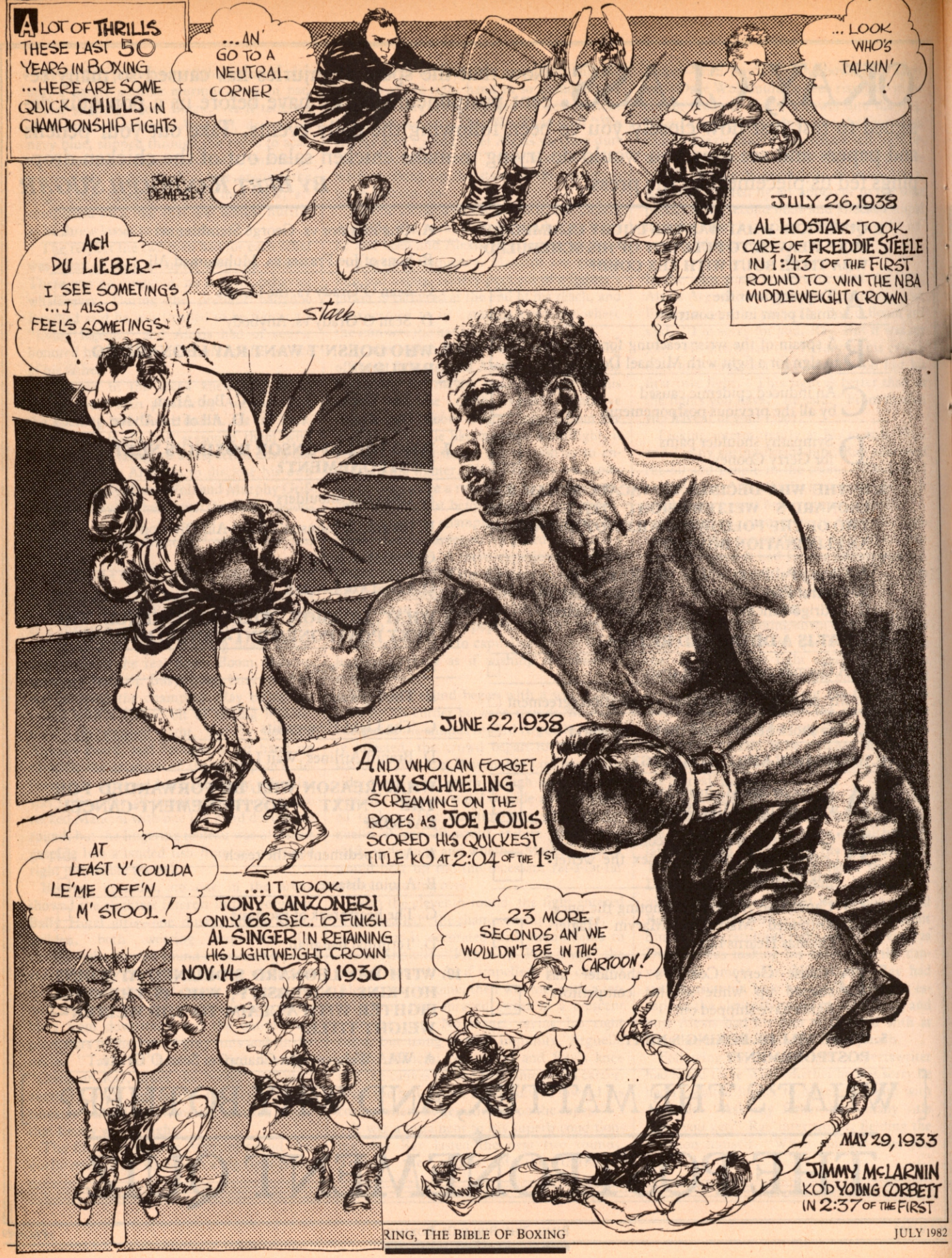
D. Terminal hangnail ☐

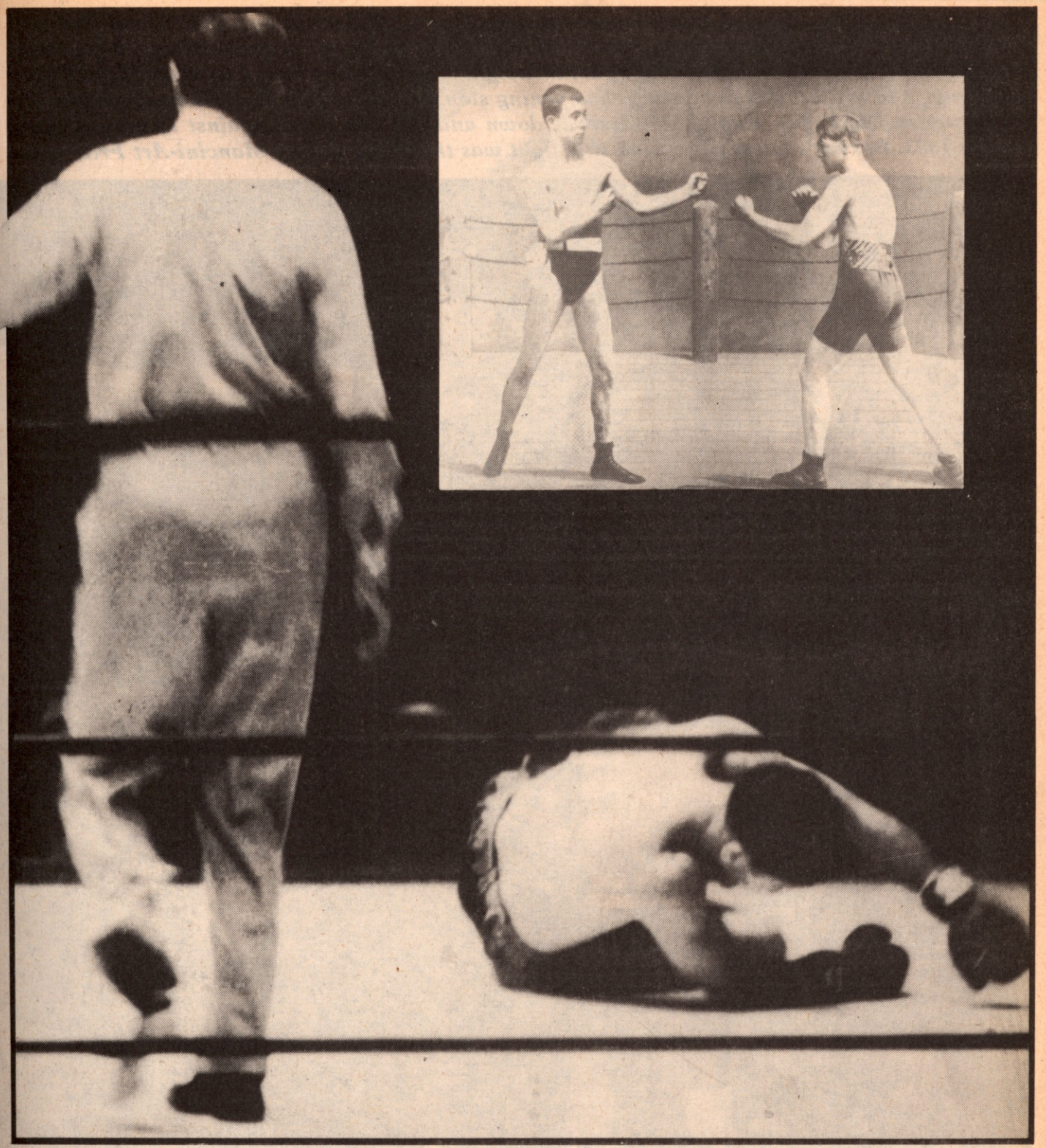
10. WITH RAY LEONARD SIDELINED AT JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, WHO IS THE ONLY FIGHTER WITH A CLAIM TO THE WELTERWEIGHT TITLE?

A. WAA Welterweight Champion Sean O'Grady ☐

[WHAT'S THE MATTER, AND WHY BOTHER?]

THE POSTPONEMENT QUIZ

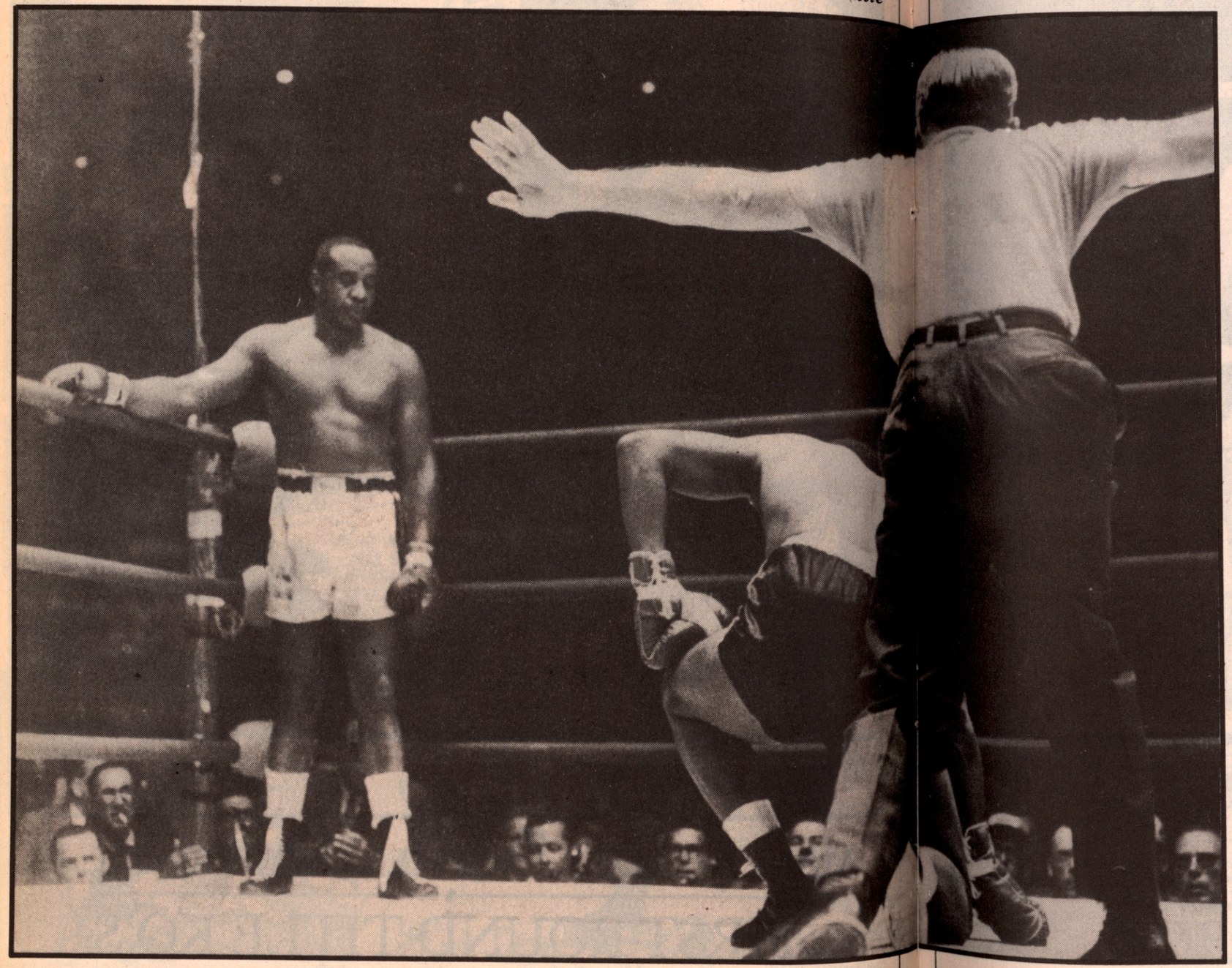

A LOT OF THRILLS THESE LAST 50 YEARS IN BOXING ...HERE ARE SOME QUICK CHILLS IN CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHTS
...AN' GO TO A NEUTRAL CORNER
JACK DEMPSEY
... LOOK WHO'S TALKIN'!
JULY 26,1938
AL HOSTAK TOOK CARE OF FREDDIE STEELE IN 1:43 OF THE FIRST ROUND TO WIN THE NBA MIDDLEWEIGHT CROWN
ACH DU LIEBER- I SEE SOMETINGS ...I ALSO FEELS SOMETINGS!
stack
JUNE 22,1938
AND WHO CAN FORGET MAX SCHMELING SCREAMING ON THE ROPES AS JOE LOUIS SCORED HIS QUICKEST TITLE KO AT 2:04 OF THE 1ST
AT LEAST Y' COULDA LE'ME OFF'N M' STOOL!
...IT TOOK TONY CANZONERI ONLY 66 SEC. TO FINISH AL SINGER IN RETAINING HIS LIGHTWEIGHT CROWN
NOV. 14 1930
23 MORE SECONDS AN' WE WOULDN'T BE IN THIS CARTOON!
MAY 29,1933
JIMMY McLARNIN KO'D YOUNG CORBETT IN 2:37 OF THE FIRST

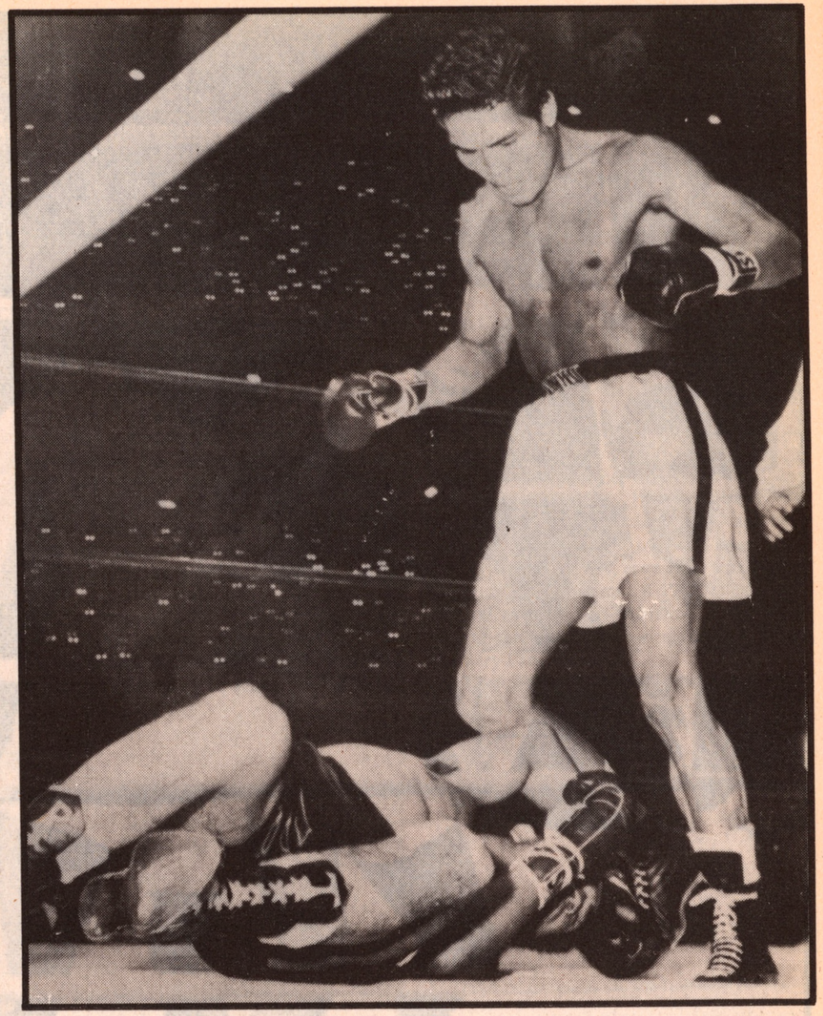


[MANCINI ADDS ANOTHER CHAPTER TO . . .]

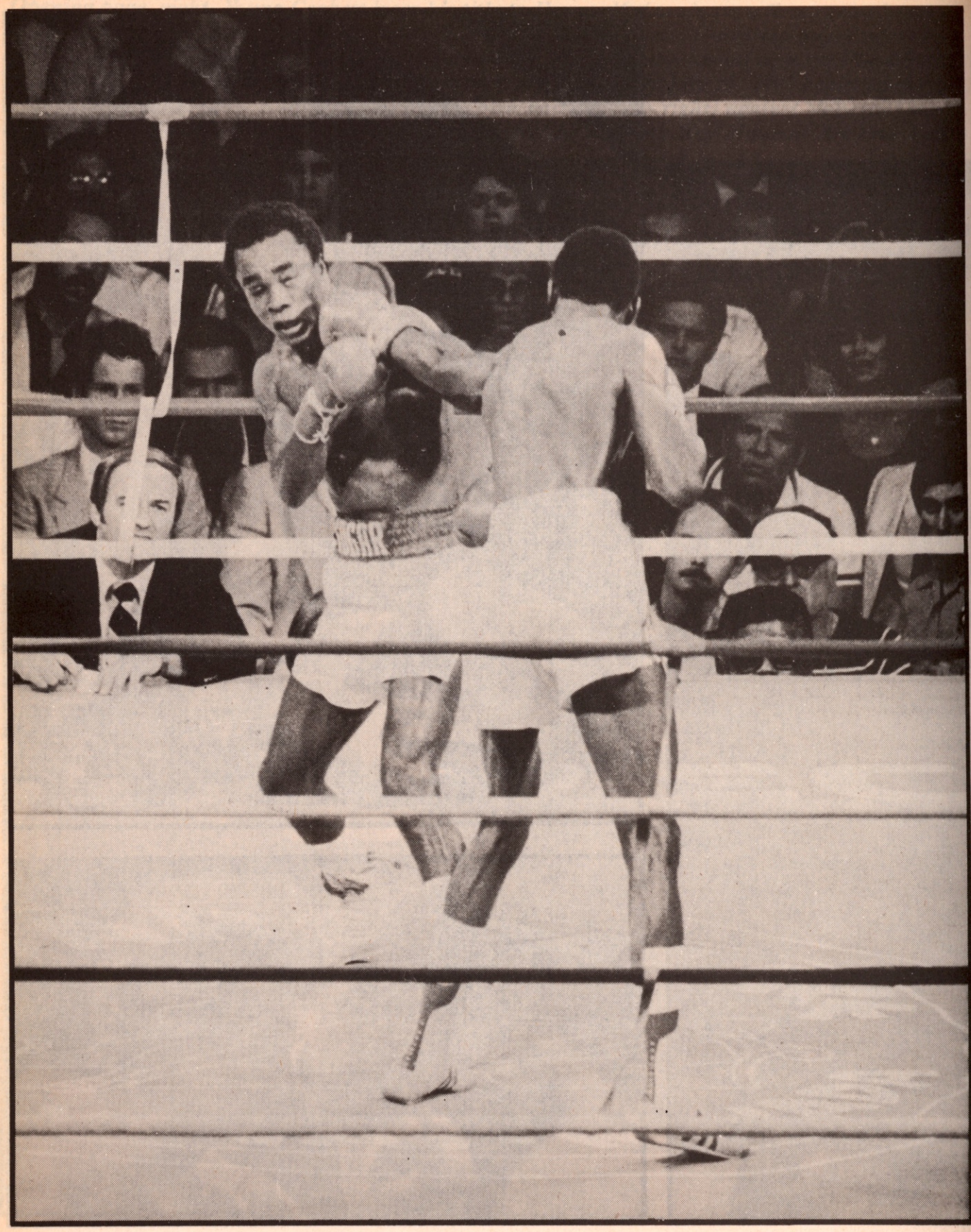
FIRST-ROUND TITLE KO'S

Opening page, right. Young Corbett loses his title to Jimmy McLarnin on a first-round knockout in May, 1933. Terry McGovern and Pedlar Palmer square off (inset, preceding page) before their September 12, 1899 bout for the vacant bantamweight crown. Sonny Liston watches Floyd Patterson struggle to his feet (below) during the opening stanza of their July 22, 1963 heavyweight title encounter in Las Vegas. Ramundo Torres is down and out (top right) against Roberto Cruz in March 1963. Boxing's latest one-round title fight was the thrilling Ray Mancini-Art Frias battle

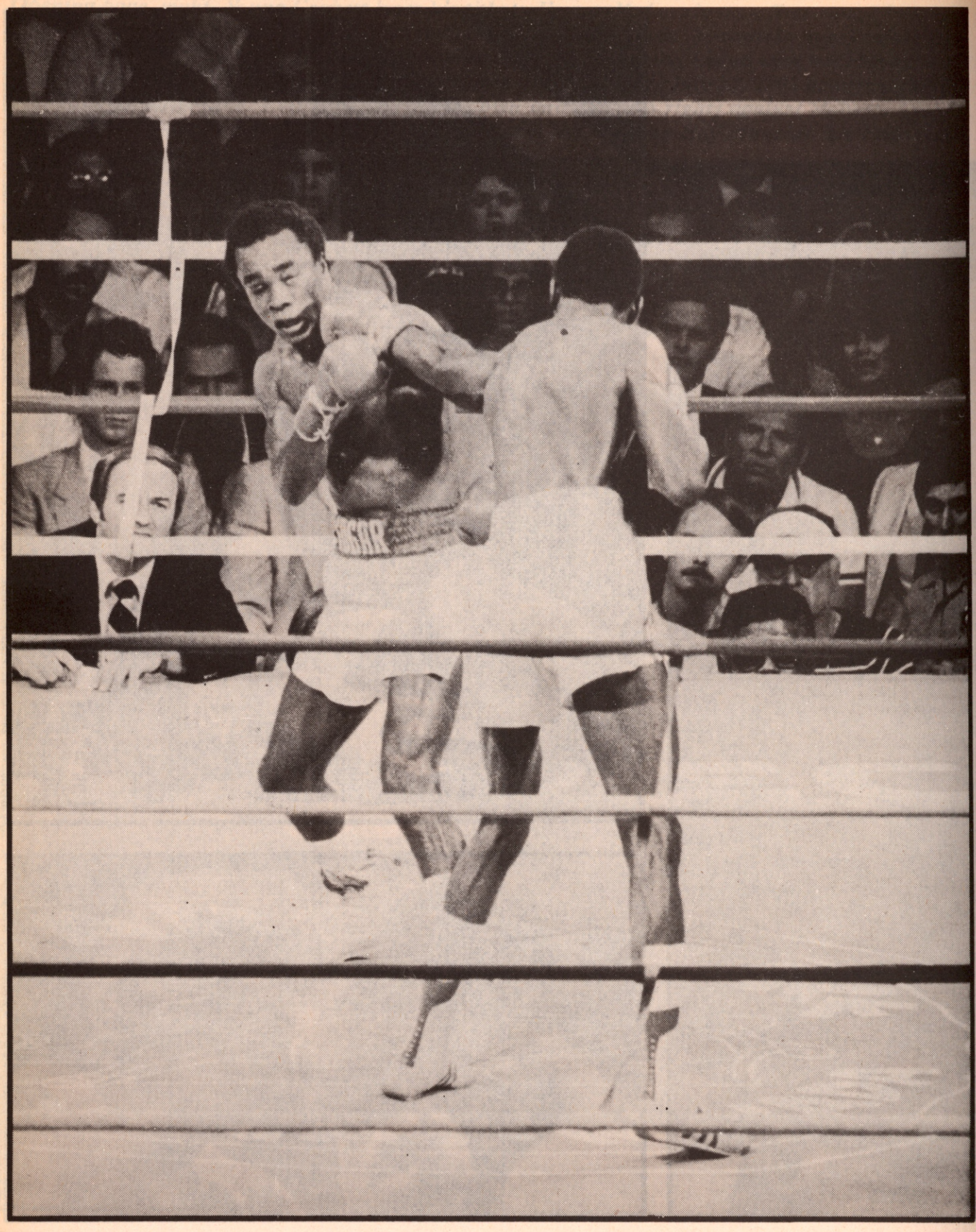




CHRIS CUELLAR



CHRIS CUELLAR



RONALD Reagan was one of the first to call and wish the welterweight champion a speedy recovery and a chance to resume his already legendary boxing career. And why not? Next to the President, Sugar Ray Leonard is probably the most recognized face in America today, and, no doubt, with more unified support and appeal. But like the beleaguered President, Leonard also faces an uncertain future following two hours of surgery May 9 at Johns Hopkins' Wilmer Eye Clinic to repair a partially detached retina in his left eye—the same eye that had been severely damaged and all but closed by Thomas Hearns's piston-like jab in Las Vegas last September before Sugar Ray mounted his courageous comeback to score an electrifying 14th-round knockout. ***BY ALAN GOLDSTEIN***

THE CLOUD THAT NOW HANGS OVER the charismatic, 26-year-old millionaire-boxer triggered shock waves throughout the boxing fraternity. For Leonard not only reigned over the welterweight class, but all of ringdom, having replaced Muhammad Ali as both boxing's richest and most influential figure.

And it all happened with unnerving suddenness. Sugar Ray, who had erased all questions about the size of his heart and punch in the dramatic victory over Hearns, was only six days away from defending his title against Roger Stafford in Buffalo, when, on the pretext of visiting his wife and mother on Mother's Day, he left training camp and returned to Maryland.

He was next seen in a hospital gown, being examined by Dr. Ronald Michels, associate professor of ophthmalogy at the Wilmer Clinic, who informed the champion that the blurred vision he had begun to experience in sparring sessions two weeks earlier could be traced to a loss of peripheral vision in his left eye.

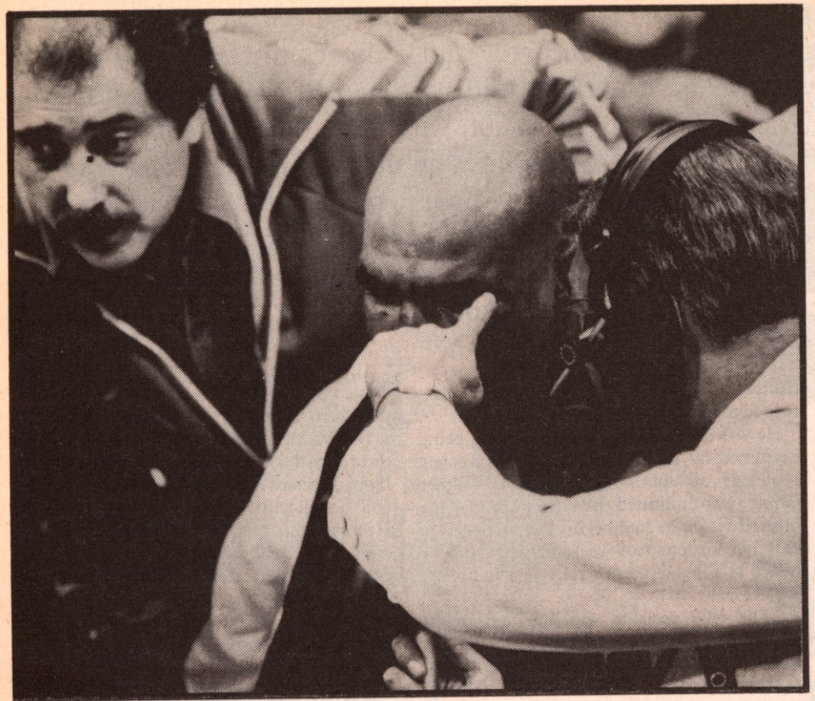
"The only decision was how rapidly he wanted the surgery performed," said Dr. Michels. "Ray decided to have it performed as soon as possible. The sooner we could operate, the better the chances were for his complete recovery."

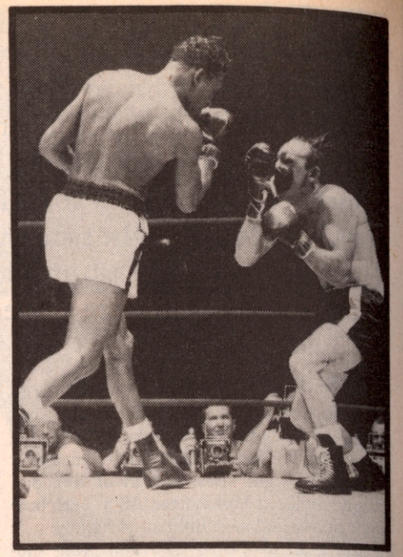
Dr. Michels refused to speculate whether the retina had been damaged in the Hearns fight. Leonard's former trainer, Dave Jacobs, had noted with a touch of irony after the Hearns fight, that his old protege had been taking unusual punishment to the head, dating back to the first encounter with Roberto Duran in the summer of 1980 when a compulsion to prove his manhood found Sugar Ray uncharacteristically slugging it out with the fiery Panamanian.

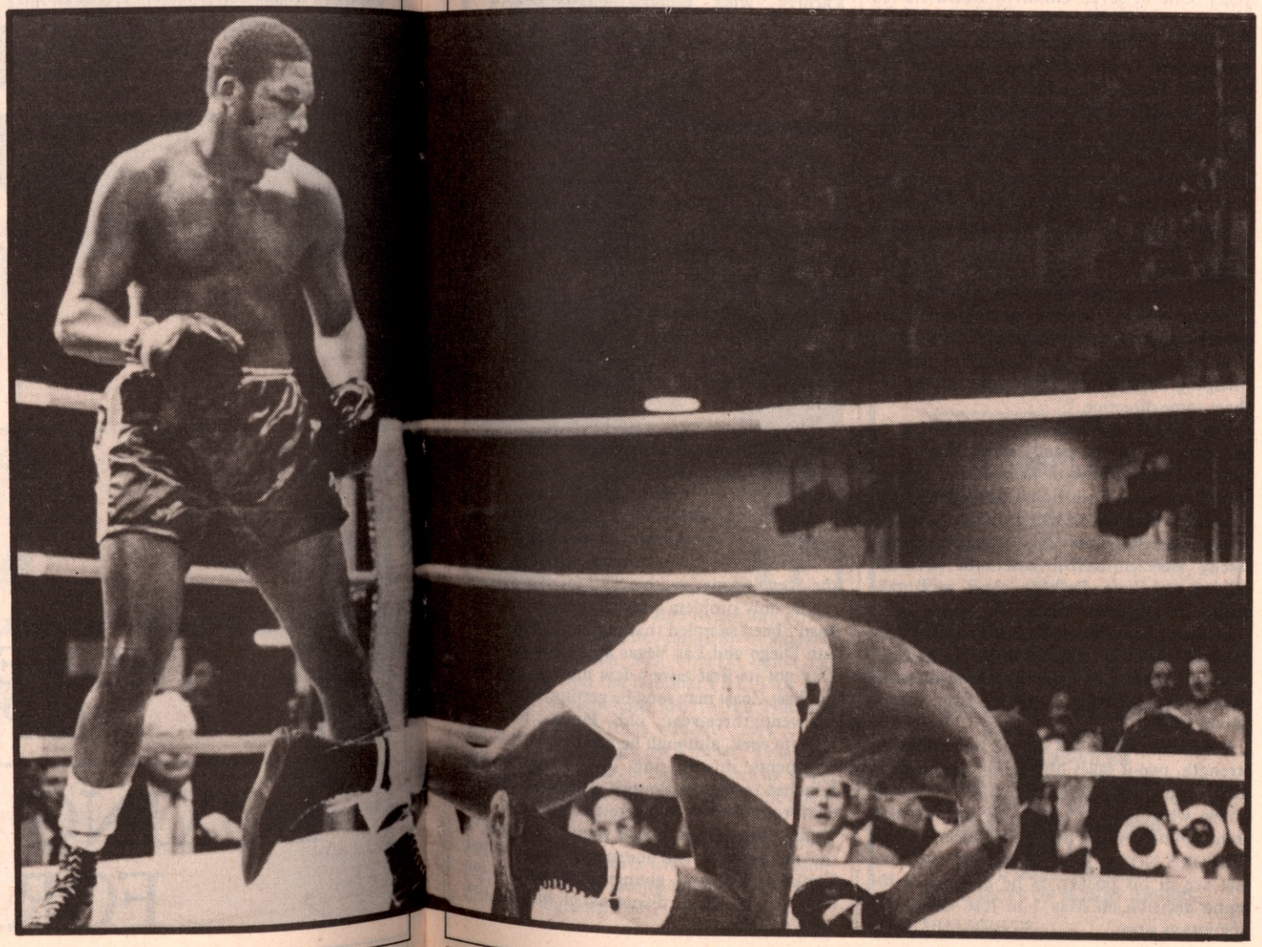
"That wasn't his style," said Jacobs, who

THE WELTERWEIGHT DIVISION IS PUT ON HOLD AS . . .

BOXING KEEPS AN EYE OUT FOR RAY'S RETURN







Commentator Howard Cosell points to the left eye of Earnie Shavers (above), which had been successfully operated on months before. The battered left eye of Carmen Basilio is evident (above right) as Sugar Ray Robinson rips a right through his guard in March, 1958. Leotis Martin watches as Sonny Liston tumbles to the canvas (right) in December, 1969. Martin stopped Liston in round nine. However, in victory, Martin also suffered a detached retina which ended his career.

would leave the Leonard camp after that defeat, the lone mark on Sugar Ray's otherwise unblemished record. "Ray had gained his popularity and become so effective as a master boxer. He went back to boxing and humiliated Duran in the rematch, but, for some reason, he went back to slugging and took a lot of head punches against Ayub Kalule. Larry Bonds and, of course, Hearns.

"Whether he was already having eye problems. I don't know. But I would never have allowed him to adopt that flatfooted style. Ali never took a real beating until he started to play 'Rope-a-Dope.' He was a great boxer, and so was Sugar Ray. It's sad that this had to happen to him."

While Leonard convalesces, fight figures across the country have almost unanimously urged him to quit rather than risk permanent damage to his eye. Almost to a man, the promoters, managers, trainers and fellow fighters argued that Leonard, having gained revenge against Duran and disproved Hearns's invincibility, had nothing left to prove.

But there were a few exceptions who felt that Leonard, at the peak of his ring artistry, popularity and earning powers, could continue his quest for immortality.

"Leonard is a very competitive fighter, and he'll be back," said former heavyweight contender Earnie Shavers, now mounting his own comeback after eye surgery.

"It's ironic," he said. "We both had our operations performed at Hopkins by Dr. Michels, who is considered the best in the country at retina surgery. In fact, they tell me my injury was more acute, but I've had no problems with my eye since surgery.

"At 37, I didn't plan on fighting again. But I've had serious financial problems and the surgery permitted my comeback. I'm motivated again. It's like a second life (in his most recent fight he knocked out Joe Bugner in the second round). With Leonard being so much younger than me, everything should be easier for him if he just follows the doctor's advice."

While Dr. Michels told the inquiring press that chances were extremely remote that Leonard would suffer a recurrence of his retina problem should he choose to fight again, his optimistic view was not shared by noted ring physicians across the country.

"His eye ain't never going to be as good as God made it," cautioned Ferdie Pacheco, "The Fight Doctor" who became *persona non grata* in Ali's camp when he urged the former heavyweight king to retire when his reflexes slowed to a crawl and his speech became slurred. "Unfortunately, the world is full of fighters who can't see right."

Pacheco's caution was supported by Dr. Bernhart Schwartz, who has worked as the attending physician at major bouts in the Los Angeles area the past 30 years.

"He would be in real danger of going blind," said Schwartz. "Leonard would be crazy to fight again. There's no rule in the California commission to stop him, but I feel certain they wouldn't let him fight again. Outside of brain damage, a detached retina is as serious an injury a fighter can receive."

But all the genuine concern and commonsense advice of family, friends and fans could be ignored by the historically-conscious Leonard. Unlike one-time title contenders Harold Weston, Jr., and Jorge Ahumada—who elected to retire after suffering similar eye damage—Sugar Ray is driven by an almost compulsive desire to leave an indelible mark on the RING RECORD BOOK.

For the original Sugar Ray, it was much the same. We remember visiting with Robinson in June, 1965, when he was preparing to fight an obscure pug named Young Joe Walcott at the antiquated Washington Coliseum. Robinson had visions of winning the middleweight title again—this time from Joey Giardello.

"Yes, I need money like anyone else," he conceded. "But I'm not destitute and I don't have to fight for a living. The only reason I'm still fighting is that people keep telling me, 'It can't happen again.' But the impossible has happened to me over and over again. I'm not trying to control Ol' Father Time. But don't deny me the privilege of trying to win the title just because I'm 45 years old. Sure, I could sit back and watch the world go by, and have a normal life, but that's not my way."

Nor is it Leonard's way. He could also sit back and enjoy the sweet life, continuing to capitalize on his good looks, quick wit and matchless charisma to create more revenue than even Ali could ever imagine while hawking roach powder and the likes.

But Leonard has always needed new challenges to test his unique ability. Ego compelled him to demand a rematch with Duran even though his aching body told him otherwise. His wife, Juanita, had fainted at ringside watching the brutal spectacle and begged him to retire. After examining his battered features in the looking glass that fateful night in Montreal, he said, "That's it, no more. I gave it all I had, but that's it."

Juanita, of course, knew better. During a post-fight vacation in Hawaii, she waited patiently while Leonard found a gentle way of telling her that he would challenge Duran once again. Finally, he said, "I've got to tell you something, sweetheart. I can't quit fighting."

"I just looked at him and smiled," Juanita recalled. "It took you a little time, didn't it?" she said. "But I was expecting it. I knew there was no way he could quit at 24. It's his career. But that's not really it. Fighting is in Ray's blood, and he was going forward, and all I could do was stand behind him."

And we expect it will be the same again for Ray and Juanita when decision-time comes again this fall when Leonard is expected to get a clean bill of health from Dr. Michels. For more than anything, Leonard is a prizefighter. And a pride-fighter as well.

Before his showdown with Hearns in the Nevada desert, he explained why he continued to play the most dangerous game of all when he was already financially secure.

"I'm at my mental best when I'm fighting," he said. "When I'm not training, I don't even know where I am. Training gives me sanity. That's the only time in my life when I know what I'm doing."

"He could quit today and live comfortably," said attorney Mike Trainer, who, amazingly, has kept Sugar Ray free of any entangling alliances and masterminded all his megabucks matches and multi-million TV contracts. "Ray has made sound investments, and he's tied up commercially with a number of major corporations like 7-UP and Franklin Sporting Goods. He also has a bright future as a TV commentator.

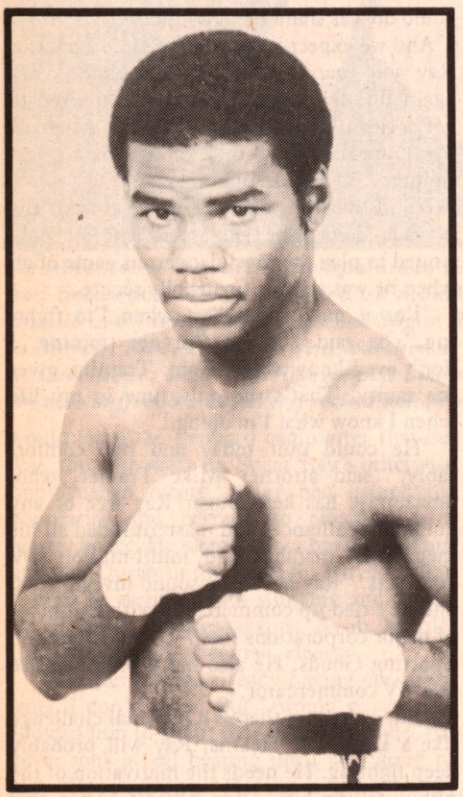
"But as long as there's a personal challenge like a Duran, or Hearns, Ray will probably keep fighting. He needs the motivation of the public telling him, 'You haven't beaten this guy yet.' Boxing is not only his livelihood, it's a big part of his life."

And so, some six months from now, we will not be surprised if Sugar Ray were to wave a gloved fist in a challenge to Hagler, or whoever poses a serious threat.

"History, that's what drives me," he said after defeating Hearns. "I don't want to be remembered as just another champion. The Hearns fight put in the GUINNESS BOOK for the greatest boxing purse. But I prefer to be remembered as one of the greatest fighters of all time."

It's something only the great ones can understand.

NEW FACES



JACKIE BEARD

WHEN KENNY ROGERS WROTE THE HIT song "The Gambler", perhaps he was writing about Jackson, Tennessee's Jackie Beard, who's not counting the money that's sitting on the table because "there'll be plenty of time for counting, when the dealings done."

Featherweight Jackie Beard could have made some quick money when he turned pro in 1980. He could have joined the illustrious "Tomorrow's Champions", which included current WBA Junior Middleweight Champion Davey Moore, as well as other Olympic hopefuls who never made it to the Moscow Olympic Games because of President Carter's boycott.

Instead he and his amateur coach Rayford Collins, who still remains as Jackie's personal co-ordinator and assistant, joined Emanuel Steward's Kronk Club.

"When Jackie came to me and asked to join my stable, he had with him a promotional contract for the Tomorrow's Champions that would have guaranteed him something like $280,000 in his first 30 months. I told Jackie there was no way I could match that but he and Rayford were willing to gamble with me. They knew they wouldn't be making that kind of money the first couple of years, but they had so much confidence that Jackie would win the title." Like many of the young fighters today, Beard wants to be a free agent when he becomes champion so he can fight for the highest bidder.

Beard knows his value. He was rated the No. 1 in the world by the International Amateur Boxing Association and was the AAU's top ranked 119-pounder for three straight years. One of seven children, Beard started winning amateur boxing awards back in 1975. He won National Golden Gloves and AAU honors, won 17 of 19 international bouts, was the Pan Am Gold Medalist in 1979 and a Gold Medalist against Cuba in 1980. He was the first 119-pound boxer to win three AAU National championships in a row in the same weight class and one of only six to win three AAU titles back-to-back.

Beard, who started boxing at the age of eight so he could "stay out a little later in the winter months," is majoring in criminal justice at Jackson State Community College and hopes to work in law enforcement once he finishes boxing. He is also employed as a Junior Probation Counselor for the city of Jackson "helping kids stay out of trouble and giving them some direction."

Beard's "crazy" schedule, according to Steward, is that he spends about 35% of his time in Detroit, 50% in Jackson and 15% in training on site for a fight. And speaking of schedules, Steward's 1982 plans are "May 1st against Jose Caba on ABC, then June 11 for Nicky Perez's NABF title, the Diablito Valdez and Juan LaPorte. And we'll take Rocky Lockridge any time."

Steward, who thinks it's a toss-up between Hearns, McCrory and Beard as his best all-around fighter, also gives four reasons while Beard will be boxing's ,'golden boy" by the end of 1982.

"Number one-he has unbelievable physical strength, two-it takes him minimum effort to avoid punches, three-he thinks, four-he knows when he is in range and can pull back from a punch even if he's off-balance."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Jackie Beard did not have that ace in his pocket, as he dropped a 10-round decision on May 1 to Jose Caba—his first loss as a pro. STEVE MEDWID

JACKIE BEARD

Height: 5'5"
Weight: 125 pounds
Born: September 10, 1961
Amateur Record: 116-8

1981

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	RESULT
Apr. 25	Reyes (Corky) Polanda	Phoenix	KO 2
June 11	Gilbert Favilla	Detroit	KO 2
June 26	David Green	Nashville	KO 1
Sept. 29	Robert Anderson	Phoenix	W 8
Oct. 13	Mike Rodriguez	Phoenix	KO 2
Oct. 29	Jeff Long	Plainfield	KO 1
Nov. 19	Sylvester Kennon	Detroit	W 8
Dec. 3	Alvin Fowler	Jackson	W 10
Dec. 17	Rafael Rodriguez	Phoenix	KO 2

1982

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	RESULT
Jan. 23	Manuel Santos	Detroit	KO 6
Feb. 11	Carlos Santana	Jackson	KO 2
Feb. 28	Reyes Gonzales	Las Vegas	KO 5

Summary

BOUTS	WINS	LOSSES	DRAWS	KO'S
12	12	0	0	9

JAMES "THE HEAT" KINCHEN

There's something new cooking out in San Diego, but it's leaving a bad taste in some fighter's mouths. So, if you can't stand "The Heat", then get out of the kitchen. Or is that Kinchen?

The recipe is very easy to make. Just add one middleweight named James "The Heat" Kinchen (not available in most supermarkets), throw in one opponent, stir things up a little bit, and bake for four-five rounds, allowing for the opponent to melt. To put the icing from the cake, remove Kinchen from the oven and mark with a "V" for victory.

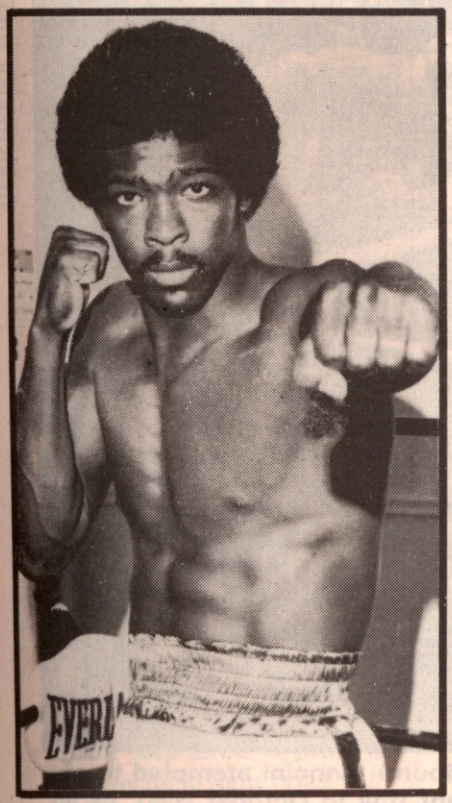
The only problem with this recipe is that it hasn't been sampled that much outside of the San Diego and Las Vegas areas, but Atlantic City got its first taste a few months ago and the East Coast may soon be getting seconds.

Twenty-three-year old James Kinchen loves to cook, although he prefers roasting his opponents in the ring. In 20 fights, the Kinchen recipe has flopped only once, that an eight-round draw to Everett Conklin in Las Vegas. However, Kinchen went right back to the old cookbook and one month later, invited Conklin for dessert, giving him heartburn for five rounds before disposing of him in the sixth round.

For Kinchen, the draw could not have come at a better time. He had won 13 straight since turning pro and had 11 knockouts. He was fighting on the Sanchez-Gomez undercard and as manager Wes Wambold put it, "he simply tightened up with all the reporters around." He told Wambold that he would never let anything get to him again and added Wambold, "he was hungry again."

Kinchen finished out a busy 1981 year, fighting 15 times, with only Conklin taking him past six rounds. But 1982 has been no piece of cake for "The Heat". In January, Marvin Standers stayed tough for nine rounds before falling in the tenth. He then went the distance with veteran Rudy Robles, and traveled east to Atlantic City where he knocked out Leroy Green in nine rounds.

Although Kinchen has fought as light heavyweight at 165 pounds, he is crusading as a middleweight. Since turning pro in 1980,



Kinchen has not been able to get any television exposure despite impressive amateur statistics. He won 107 of 117 fights (75 knockouts), won the national PAL Title as a light heavyweight and lost in the National AAU semi-finals three straight years (1978-80). Originally from McKinney, Texas, he began boxing in high school when he saw a friend's boxing picture in the paper and spent five years as an amateur.

Despite a 19-0-1 record, Wambold realizes his recipe still needs a little bit more seasoning, but he's not letting anyone know what his secret ingredient is.

STEVE MEDWID

JAMES "THE HEAT" KINCHEN

Height: 5'9½"
Weight: 160 pounds
Born: March 1, 1958
Amateur Record: 107-10, 75 knockouts

1980

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	RESULT
Aug. 8	O'Daniel Marks	Dallas	KO 1
Sept. 23	Larry Rayford	New Orleans	KO 2

1981

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	RESULT
Jan. 22	Henry Drummond	Las Vegas	W 4
Jan. 28	Fred Garcia	San Diego	KO 2
Feb. 18	Danny Kirk	Las Vegas	KO 1
Mar. 25	Jimmy Owens	Las Vegas	W 6
Apr. 15	Larry Myers	Las Vegas	KO 2
May 1	Mike Hutchinson	San Diego	KO 2
June 3	Eddie Casper	Las Vegas	KO 2
June 12	James Williams	San Diego	KO 2
June 17	Reuben Rascone	Las Vegas	KO 1
July 8	Darryl Womack	Las Vegas	KO 2
July 29	Juan Rivas	Las Vegas	KO 2
Aug. 21	Everett Conklin	Las Vegas	D 8
Sept. 30	Everett Conklin	Las Vegas	KO 6
Nov. 4	Ron Brown	Las Vegas	KO 6
Nov. 25	Jesse Avila	Las Vegas	KO 6

1982

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	RESULT
Jan. 13	Marvin Sanders	Las Vegas	KO 10
Feb. 17	Rudy Robles	Las Vegas	W 10
Mar. 27	Leroy Green Jr.	Atlantic City	KO 9

Summary

BOUTS	WINS	LOSSES	DRAWS	KO'S
20	19	0	1	16

AUTHENTIC BRITISH RECORDS COMPLETE

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Bombardier Billy Wells, Joe Beckett, Frank Goddard, Phil Scott, Reggie Meen, Jack Petersen, Len Harvey, Ben Foord, Tommy Farr, Jack London, Bruce Woodcock, Jack Gardner, Johnny Williams, Don Cockell, Joe Erskine. **MIDDLEWEIGHTS:** Ted (Kid) Lewis, Jock McAvoy, Roland Todd, Tommy Milligan, Alex Ireland.

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHT OF THE MONTH

MANCINI-FRIAS
WBA Lightweight Title

LAS VEGAS, NEV.—Ray (Boom Boom) Mancini, 135, took just two minutes and thirty-four second of the first round to divest Arturo Frias, 134½, of his WBA lighweight title.

The scheduled 15-round bout was as searing as it was short. Both fighters battled with the ferocity of Attila the Hun.

Both men came out slugging at the opening bell, and Frias immediately staggered his opponent with a left hook, as Mancini held on for survival.

Frias, making the second defense of his crown, continued to dominate the early part of the round with a sharp left jab and left-right combinations.

But Mancini, cheered on by his family, and 500 supporters from his hometown of Youngstown, Ohio, fought back courageously. He opened up with a series of devastating left hooks, and he and Frias traded punches with such thunderous action that the crowd of 3,500 got to is feet and roared in unison.

Mancini proceeded to knock Frias down with a left hook. The champion was up at the count of seven, but Mancini swarmed all over him with lefts and rights.

Frias suffered a nasty cut under his left eyes, and with blood, streaming down his cheek, found himself pinned to the ropes by his challenger.

Mancini pounded at Frias with both hands, and threw 25 unanswered punches at the now dazed champion.

Finally, referee Richard Green stepped in and stopped the punishment with just six seconds remaning in the round. Frias, battered and bleeding, did not argue with the referee.

But, in the post-fight press conference, the former champion had second thoughts as he said: "Not taking anything away from Ray, but I felt the fight was stopped too soon. I was stunned, but not so stunned that I couldn't hear my corner say: "10 seconds left." When I heard that I just held back, and tried to get my composure for the next round."

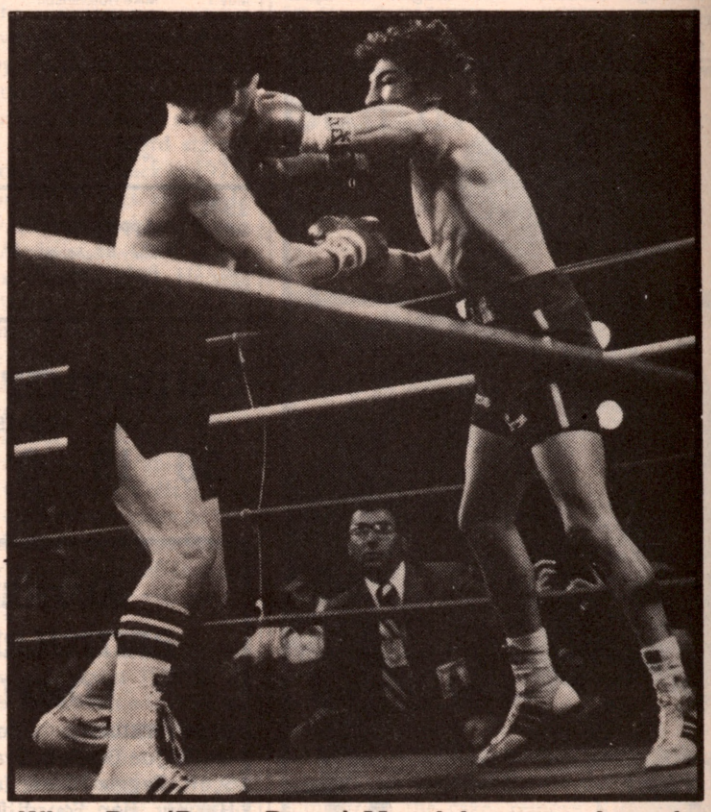
Frias went on: "I'm proud to have held the title; and I know Ray will hold the same title with pride and dignity. It was a very hard fight, and we both gave our all. In fact, I always give 110% of myself in every fight. And I will be back!"

Frias' manager, Los Angeles attorney Norman Kaplan, was quietly indignant about the way the fight was stopped. Said Kaplan: "I hated to see the fight end the way it did. This was a title fight, and it seems strange that it stopped six seconds before the end of the round. I admire Mancini, but I still feel tthat Art should have been given the chance to continue. He heard the corner call "10 seconds," so he could not have been in that bad a shape."

Meanwhile, a jubilant Mancini felt that he had fulfilled his destiny in winning the title that had been denied his father, Lenny Mancini, some 40 years ago.

Said Ray: "I thank God for the strength and power he gave me to win his title. I've been on both ends of the coin; and I know how it

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH



HERB HERPOLSHEIMER

When Ray (Boom Boom) Mancini atempted to win the world lightweight title in October, 1981, he attempted to do it the hard way—by challenging a legend—in this case Alexis Arguello. The legend won. Mancini learned his lessons. He learned them well. Seven months later, he went after the lightweight crown again. Only this time, Mancini went after the WBA crown, the one worn by Art Frias. Unlike so many title challengers who step into the ring hoping to outpoint the champ and/or merely go the distance, Mancini went right after Frias, with all intentions to knock the crown off his head. In as furious a first round as any title fight has seen in years, Mancini won, making him the champion he had promised his father years ago he would be, as well as *The Ring's* "Fighter of the Month."

RING'S INTERNATIONAL RATINGS

FOR MONTHS WE HAVE BEEN REMINDING YOU—IF YOU'RE still with us—that the principal product of the WBA and the WBC are mistakes. And yet these two organizations are as different as, say, anarchy and dictatorship.

The WBA, on the one glove, seems to take deep satisfaction in the fact that their rules are, in effect, no rules at all; that they are all subject to change by some mysterious rule known as rule 19, which allows the Executive Committee to change any rule not to their momentary liking. Thus, all WBA rules are written in light pencil. At best. (And a Federal Judge only recently held that it was like the Mad Hatter's Tea Party in Alice in Wonderland: where the rules are constantly changed to prevent a winner.)

But if that were all the WBA was culpable of, they could be dismissed as easily as giving something up for Lent. Unfortunately, we gave the WBA up for Lent, 1980, and refuse to deal with them anymore because of their venality. Why else would this group of men who only need a gun and a mask to affect their real role of being banditos, make a rematch for Art Frias with Ernesto Espana and then have Espana "step aside" in order to Ray Mancini to fight Frias? Ah, the $50,000 Espana's manager, Pepi Cordero, got to step aside, promised the first title shot against the winner for his used up fighter, you might answer. And correctly, too.

Why is it that the WBA and its henchmen continually are able to make deals like this? No longer are they content to merely take money under the table; now they take it around the table, over the table and even, in some cases, take the tables as well. We will not concern ourselves with this group of rapscallions further.

However, that other group known as the WBC is not above salvation. They have, demonstrated time and again that they are the best in what is admittedly a two-group race. There is but one small drawback: Jose Sulaiman. Now we have no personal brief with Senor Sulaiman. What he did back in 1962, founding the WBC, was a step in the right direction. But electing himself El Presidente for life was hardly a step which could create faith in an organization designed to restore faith in a then-fallen sport.

We know that Senor Sulaiman is probably as interested in hearing from me again as Henry Kissinger would in hearing the virtues of self-effacement, but he, and he alone, can make the WBC the one world organization worthy of the name "organization."

The way he can do so is, as the founder of the WBC, retire to a position of President Emeritus—or Laureate, if you will—and allow someone else to become President of this body. In that manner he can become one of boxing's elder statesmen when it sorely needs one, and remove himself from its day-to-day workings, thus preserving his ideal and not risking sullying his handiwork. We are not asking him, like General MacArthur, to "fade away," only to step back so that boxing can benefit. As well as his name and that of his organization. The only one left.

BERT RANDOLPH SUGAR

RING RATINGS 40 YEARS AGO

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champion
Joe Louis, Detroit, Mich.

1. Bob Pastor, Saratoga, N.Y.
2. Billy Conn, Pittsburgh, Pa.
3. Melio Bettina, Beacon, N.Y.
4. Roscoe Toles, Detroit, Mich.
5. Gus Dorazio, Philadelphia, Pa.
6. Pat Valentino, San Francisco
7. Harry Bobo, Pittsburgh, Pa.
8. Turkey Thompson, Los Angeles
9. Alberto Lovell, Argentina
10. Tami Mauriello, New York, N.Y.

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champion
Sammy Angott, Philadelphia, Pa.

1. Bob Montgomery, Philadelphia
2. Allie Stolz, Newark, N.J.
3. Lenny Mancini, Youngstown, Ohio
4. Juan Zurita, Mexico City, Mexico
5. Maxie Shapiro, New York, N.Y.
6. Bobby Ruffin, Bridgeport, Conn.
7. Chester Rico, New York, N.Y.
8. George Latka, San Jose, Calif.
9. Willie Joyce, Chicago, Ill.
10. Ray Lunny, San Francisco, Calif.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champion
Gus Lesnevich, Cliffside, N.J.

1. Booker Beckwith, Chicago, Ill.
2. Jimmy Bivins, Cleveland, Ohio
3. Ken Overlin, Decatur, Illinois
4. Johnny Colan, New York, N.Y.
5. Anton Christoforidis, Greece
6. Alabama Kid, Concord, Ga.
7. Billy Soose, Farell, Pa.
8. Tommy Tucker, Rockaway, N.Y.
9. Lloyd Marshall, Sacramento
10. Jack Coggins, San Diego, Calif.

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champion
Chalky Wright, Los Angeles, Calif.

1. Lulu Costantino, New York, N.Y.
2. Harry Jeffra, Baltimore, Md.
3. Pedro Hernandez, Puerto Rico
4. Jimmy Hatcher, Lake City, S.C.
5. Bobby (Poison) Ivy, Hartford, Conn.
6. Mike Raffa, Weirton, Pa.
7. Sal Bartolo, Boston, Mass.
8. Jackie Wilson, Pittsburgh, Pa.
9. Benny Goldberg, Detroit, Mich.
10. Carlos Chavez, Los Angeles

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champion
Tony Zale, Gary, Indiana

1. Georgie Abrams, New York, N.Y.
2. Ernie Vigh, Carteret, N.J.
3. Tony Martin, Milwaukee, Wisc.
4. Holman Williams, Detroit, Mich.
5. Kid Tunero, Cuba
6. Ezzard Charles, Cincinnati
7. Steve Belloise, New York, N.Y.
8. Coley Welch, Portland, Me.
9. Jacob LaMotta, Bronx, N.Y.
10. Fred Apostoli, San Francisco

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champion
Lou Salica, Brooklyn, New York

1. Kui Kong Young, Hawaii
2. Rush Dalma, Philippines
3. Manuel Ortiz, Los Angeles, Calif.
4. Jim Brady, Scotland
5. Tommy Forte, Philadelphia, Pa.
6. Peter Kane, Lancaster, Eng.
7. Tony Olivera, San Francisco
8. Ham Wiloby, Trinidad
9. Freddie Pope, Columbus, Ohio
10. Kenny Lindsay, Vancouver, B.C.

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champion
Freddie Cochrane, Elizabeth, N.J.

1. Ray Robinson, New York, N.Y.
2. Jackie Wilson, Los Angeles
3. Charley Burley, Pittsburgh, Pa.
4. Cocoa Kid, Puerto Rico
5. Garvey Young, Boston, Mass.
6. Young Kid McCoy, Detroit, Mich.
7. Marty Servo, Schenectady, N.Y.
8. Reuben Shank, Minneapolis, Minn.
9. Tony Motisi, Chicago, Ill.
10. Freddie Archer, Newark, N.J.

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champion
Title Vacant

1. Jackie Paterson, Scotland
2. Little Dado, Philippines
3. Sammy Reynolds, England
4. Joe Curran, England
5. Luis Castillo, Cuba
6. Paddy Ryan, Lancaster, Eng.
7. Small Montana, Philippines
8. Lupe Cordoza, Sacramento, Calif.
9. Humberto Espinosa, Cuba
10. Jimmy Gill, Nottingham, Eng.

From the July, 1942 issue of The Ring.

GENUINE

Budweiser Presents The Ring International Ratings

HEAVYWEIGHTS
(over 175 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

LARRY HOLMES** . . . . . Easton, Pa.
1 **Mike Weaver*** . . . . . Los Angeles, Calif.
2 **Michael Dokes** . . . . . Akron, Ohio
3 **Gerry Cooney** . . . . . Huntington, N.Y.
4 **Greg Page** . . . . . Louisville, Ky.
5 **Gerrie Coetzee** . . . . . South Africa
6 **Trevor Berbick** . . . . . Halifax, Canada
7 **James (Quick) Tillis** . . . . . Chicago, Ill.
8 **Randall (Tex) Cobb** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
9 **Tim Witherspoon** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
10 **Renaldo Snipes** . . . . . Yonkers, N.Y.

11. John Tate, 12. Leon Spinks, 13. Bernardo Mercado, 14. Larry Frazier, 15. Pinklon Thomas, 16. John Denis

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
(not over 175 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

DWIGHT BRAXTON** . . . . . Camden, N.J.
1 **Michael Spinks*** . . . . . St. Louis, Mo.
2 **Matthew Saad Muhammad** . . . . . Phila., Pa.
3 **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad** . . . Brooklyn, N.Y.
4 **Carlos DeLeon** . . . . . Puerto Rico
5 **Jerry Celestine** . . . . . New Orleans, La.
6 **Murray Sutherland** . . . . . Bay City, Mich.
7 **Marvin Camel** . . . . . Missoula, Mont.
8 **James Scott** . . . . . Rahway, N.J.
9 **Marvin Johnson** . . . . . Indianapolis, Ind.
10 **Jerry Martin** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.

11. S.T. Gordon, 12. John Davis, 13. Bashiru Ali, 14. Mustapha Wasajja, 15. Vonzell Johnson, 16. Lotte Mwale, 17. Young Joe Louis, 18. Niva Tofaeoni

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
(not over 160 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

MARVIN HAGLER . . . . . Brockton, Mass.
1 **Tony Sibson** . . . . . England
2 **Frank Fletcher** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
3 **Mustafa Hamsho** . . . . . Syria
4 **Dwight Davison** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
5 **Fulgencio Obelmejias** . . . . . Venezuela
6 **Thomas Hearns** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
7 **Ray Seales** . . . . . Tacoma, Wash.
8 **James Green** . . . . . Irvington, N.J.
9 **Bernard Mays** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
10 **Alex Ramos** . . . . . Bronx, N.Y.

11. Wilford Scypion, 12. Vinnie Curto, 13. Ronnie Harris, 14. Bobby Czyz, 15. Mark Holmes, 16. James Kinchen, 17. Teddy Mann, 18. Robbie Sims, 19. Robbie Epps, 20. Curtis Parker

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
(not over 154 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

RAY LEONARD . . . . . Palmer Park, Md.
1 **Wilfred Benitez**** . . . . . Puerto Rico
2 **Ayub Kalule** . . . . . Uganda
3 **Tony Ayala, Jr.** . . . . . San Antonio, Tex.
4 **Carlos Herrera** . . . . . Argentina
5 **Davey Moore*** . . . . . New York, N.Y.
6 **Charlie Weir** . . . . . South Africa
7 **Gary Guiden** . . . . . Muncie, Ind.
8 **Roberto Duran** . . . . . Panama
9 **Clint Jackson** . . . . . Nashville, Tenn.
10 **James Green** . . . . . Irvington, N.J.

11. Walter Gomez, 12. Herol Graham, 13. Luigi Minchillo, 14. Mike McCallum, 15. Tadashi Mihara, 16. Rocky Fratto, 17. Kenny Bristol, 18. Bruce Johnson, 19. Tony Braxton, 20. Sean Mannion, 21. Nino Gonzalez

WELTERWEIGHTS
(not over 147 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

RAY LEONARD . . . . . Palmer Park, Md.
1 **Thomas Hearns** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
2 **Roger Stafford** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
3 **Pipino Cuevas** . . . . . Mexico
4 **Milton McCrory** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
5 **Donald Curry** . . . . . Ft. Worth, Texas
6 **Roberto Duran** . . . . . Panama
7 **Colin Jones** . . . . . England
8 **Kevin Howard** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
9 **Bobby Joe Young** . . . . . Steubenville, Ohio
10 **Marlon Starling** . . . . . Hartford, Conn.

11. Randy Shields, 12. Mauricio Bravo, 13. Pete Ranzany, 14. Luis Primera, 15. Davey Moore, 16. Pat Hallacy, 17. Mark Harris, 18. Kevin Morgan, 19. Sean O'Grady, 20. Akio Kameda, 21. Hans Henrik Palm, 22. Jo Kimpuani, 23. Bruce Finch, 24. Chung-Jae Hwang

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
(not over 140 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

AARON PRYOR* . . . . . Cincinnati, Ohio
1 **Saoul Mamby**** . . . . . New York, N.Y.
2 **Jo Kimpuani** . . . . . France
3 **Dujuan Johnson** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
4 **Johnny Bumphus** . . . . . Nashville, Tenn.
5 **Leroy Haley** . . . . . Las Vegas, Nevada
6 **Miguel Montilla** . . . . . Dominican Rep.
7 **Steve Hearon** . . . . . Houston, Texas
8 **Ronnie Shields** . . . . . Port Arthur, Texas
9 **Willie Rodriguez** . . . . . Allentown, Pa.
10 **Billy Costello** . . . . . Kingston, Pa.

11. Bruce Curry, 12. Monroe Brooks, 13. Obisia Nwankpa, 14. Guillermo Fernandez, 15. Juan Jose Gimenez, 16. Antonio Cervantes, 17. Lennox Blackmoore, 18. Clint McKenzie, 19. Thomas Americo, 20. Steve Early, 21. Patrizio Oliva, 22. Hugo Quartapelle

How **The Ring** International Ratings Panel works: Boxing authorities from all six major continents have submitted their ballots—marked from one to ten to indicate their rankings under **The Ring**'s champion—to reflect their evaluation of the relative challengers' positions as of May 21, 1982. Their ballots were then weighted with scores of from ten (for a first-place vote) to one (for a tenth-place vote) and totaled up to provide the final standings. After the top ten were tabulated, those other fighters receiving votes were then listed in order, according to the number of votes received, from 11th on.

(AS OF MAY 21, 1982)

The names following each division received votes (in order of their listing)

***WBA champion** ****WBC champion**

LIGHTWEIGHTS
(not over 135 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

ALEXIS ARGUELLO** . . . . . Nicaragua
1 **Aaron Pryor** . . . . . Cincinnati, Ohio
2 **Ray Mancini*** . . . . . Youngstown, Ohio
3 **Andrew Ganigan** . . . . . Honolulu, Ha.
4 **Art Frias** . . . . . Los Angeles, Calif.
5 **Howard Davis, Jr.** . . . . . Glen Cove, N.Y.
6 **Gonzallo Montellano** . . . . . Bakersfield, Calif.
7 **Hilmer Kenty** . . . . . Detroit, Mich.
8 **Rodolfo (Gato) Gonzalez** . . . . . Mexico
9 **Edwin Viruet** . . . . . Jersey City, N.J.
10 **Claude Noel** . . . . . Trinidad, W.I.

11. Roberto Elizondo, 12. Ernesto Espana, 13. James Busceme, 14. Curtis Harris, 15. Herman Montes, 16. Greg Coverson, 17. Jorge Morales, 18. Barry Michael, 19. Cocoa Sanchez, 20. Orlando Romero

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
(not over 130 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

SAMUEL SERRANO* . . . . . Puerto Rico
1 **Rolando Navarrete**** . . . . . Honolulu, Ha.
2 **Cornelius Boza-Edwards** . . . . . England
3 **Edwin Rosario** . . . . . Puerto Rico
4 **Rafael (Bazooka) Limon** . . . . . Mexico
5 **Bobby Chacon** . . . . . Pacoima, Calif.
6 **Yasutsune Uehara** . . . . . Japan
7 **Johnny Sato** . . . . . Stockton, Calif.
8 **John Verderosa** . . . . . Staten Island, N.Y.
9 **Ildelfonso Bethelmy** . . . . . Venezuela
10 **Carlos Pinango** . . . . . Venezuela

11. Chung-Il Choi, 12. Hector Camacho, 13. Jorge Alvarado, 14. Enrique Maxwell, 15. Mario Vizcaya, 16. Frankie Baltazar, 17. Il-Bok Lee, 18. Johnny Aba, 19. Leonardo Moreno, 20. Hector Cortez, 21. Alfredo Paiva, 22. Reinaldo Hidalgo

FEATHERWEIGHTS
(not over 126 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

SALVADOR SANCHEZ** . . . . . Mexico
1 **Eusebio Pedroza*** . . . . . Panama
2 **Wilfredo Gomez** . . . . . Puerto Rico
3 **Juan LaPorte** . . . . . New York, N.Y.
4 **Rocky Lockridge** . . . . . Paterson, N.J.
5 **Ruben Castillo** . . . . . Bakersfield, Calif.
6 **Mario Miranda** . . . . . Colombia
7 **Pat Cowdell** . . . . . England
8 **Roberto Rubaldino** . . . . . Mexico
9 **Jose Caba** . . . . . Dominican Republic
10 **Paul Ferrari** . . . . . Australia

11. Reyes Gonzalez, 12. Marcos Villasana, 13. Guillermo Vallejo, 14. Freddie Roach, 15. Bernard Taylor, 16. Tony Santana, 17. Augustin Martinez, 18. Bernabe Montanez, 19. Gustavo Salgado

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
(not over 122 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

WILFREDO GOMEZ** . . . . . Puerto Rico
1 **Sergio Palma*** . . . . . Argentina
2 **Mike Ayala** . . . . . New York, N.Y.
3 **Jaime Garza** . . . . . Los Angeles, Calif.
4 **Leo Cruz** . . . . . Dominican Republic
5 **Ricardo Cardona** . . . . . Colombia
6 **Lupe Pintor** . . . . . Mexico
7 **Roberto Rubaldino** . . . . . Mexico
8 **Juan (Kid) Meza** . . . . . Los Angeles, Calif.
9 **Soon-Hyun Chung** . . . . . Korea
10 **Nicky Perez** . . . . . Tucson, Ariz.

11. Carmelo Negron, 12. Oscar Muniz, 13. Jorge Lujan, 14. Joaquin Acuna, 15. Franco Torregoza, 16. Carlos Mendoza, 17. Vilchit Muangroi-Et, 18. Juan Antonio Lopez, 19. Julio Saba, 20. Salvatore Melluzo

BANTAMWEIGHTS
(not over 118 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

JEFF CHANDLER* . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
1 **Lupe Pintor**** . . . . . Mexico
2 **Chul-Ho Kim** . . . . . Korea
3 **Kiko Bejines** . . . . . Mexico
4 **Albert Davila** . . . . . Los Angeles, Calif.
5 **Oscar Muniz** . . . . . Los Angeles, Calif.
6 **Eijiro Murata** . . . . . Japan
7 **Johnny Carter** . . . . . Philadelphia, Pa.
8 **Jose R. Narvaez** . . . . . Argentina
9 **Jiro Watanabe** . . . . . Japan
10 **Freddie Jackson** . . . . . Houston, Texas

11. Rafael Orono, 12. Julian Solis, 13. Jaime Garza, 14. Miguel Iriarte, 15. Carlos Bejarano, 16. Diego Rosario, 17. Jovito Rengifo, 18. Welile Nkosinkulu, 19. Jorge Ramirez, 20. Ramon Soria, 21. Seung-Hoon Lee, 22. Artemio Ramirez, 23. Enrique Sanchez, 24. Shuichi Isogami

FLYWEIGHTS
(not over 112 pounds)
WORLD CHAMPION

PRUDENCIO CARDONA** . . . . . Colombia
1 **Tadashi Tomori** . . . . . Japan
2 **Amado Ursua** . . . . . Mexico
3 **Katsuo Tokashiki** . . . . . Japan
4 **Santos Laciar*** . . . . . Argentina
5 **Hilario Zapata** . . . . . Panama
6 **Juan Herrera** . . . . . Mexico
7 **Antonio Avelar** . . . . . Mexico
8 **Hwan Jin Kim** . . . . . Korea
9 **Rafael Pedroza** . . . . . Panama
10 **Candido Tellez** . . . . . Mexico

11. Gustavo Ballas, 12. German Torres, 13. Luis Ibarra, 14. Betulio Gonzalez, 15. Juan Diaz, 16. Reinaldo Becerra, 17. Gabriel Bernal, 18. Eleoncio Mercedes, 19. Alonso Gonzalez, 20. Stephen Muchoki, 21. Pedro Flores

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feels to win and to lose. Art is still a champion. Nobody can take that away from him."

"Boom Boom" paid further tribute to his beaten oponent, saying: "Art stung me early; he was all over me. I was hoping to just get though the first round. But then when I got him on the ropes I just kept throwing punches until the referee stopped the fight. Who knows what would have happened if the fight had gone on to the second and third round?"

Mancini then boomed: "This is the greatest thing in my life. And I will be a true Champion. I will give everyone who deserves it shot at my title. And I certainly will give Art a rematch. He gave me a chance at his title. Now I will give him a chance at mine."

I also want to be an example of pride and courage and dignity to all kids who follow boxing."

Mancini, who suffered his only ring loss in trying to take the WBC lightweight title away from the near-invincible Alexis Arguello, was pumped full of confidence by his stunning victory. And he claimed: "I want to fight Arguello again so we can unify the lightweight title."

At Mancini's side were his mother, father, and sister, all claiming: "This is the greatest present our son could ever give us."

The story is now legend about the elder Mancini's fight for the lightweight title against Sammy Angott in the early 40's. Lenny Mancini lost a non-title bout, and was denied a championship rematch when World War II caused him to be drafted into the Army.

And now, his son, Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini is becoming a legend in his own right, and may well take the place of the ailing Sugar Ray Leonard as the "kid with the charisma."

Mancini's enviable record is now 23-1 with 18 knockouts.

This was only the second loss against 24 victories for Art Frias, who won the title with an eighth round knockout over Claude Noel on Dec. 5 in Las Vegas.

Ironically, all five of the preliminary bouts also ended in early knockouts:

Randy Stephens, 198, KO'd Don Farmer, 204 at 2:45 of the fifth round in a scheduled 10. Referee: Joe Curtis.

Joey Olivo, 110¾, stopped Sylvester Guerrero, 111, at 1:52 of the fifth round in their scheduled 10. Guerrero was down four times, once in each of the last four rounds, before referee Joey Curtis stopped the battle.

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Chris Schwenke, 178¼, knocked out Jesse Avala, 176½, in 0:44 of the first round in another scheduled 10. Referee: Davey Pearl.

Mike Castor, 145½, stopped Jack Alvarez, 144½, at 1:09 of the 4th round in a scheduled six. Referee: Davey Pearl.

Kenny Bogner, 135, stopped Mando Cordoza, 134½, at 1:02 of the first round in a scheduled eight. Referee: John Worth.

The Mancini-Frias title card was presented by Top Rank, Inc. at the Aladdin Hotel's Theatre for the Performing Arts. The bout was broadcast live by CBS.

Attendance—2,370. Gross—$62,940. (05-08-82)

SHIRLEY NORMAN

COETZEE-LeDOUX

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA—Scott LeDoux, the "iron man" of American boxing, suffered a brutal beating when Gerrie Coetzee knocked him out in the eighth round at Rand Stadium.

The American looked a gory sight, with blood streaming from a cut above the left eye as he sagged into the ropes midway through the round after Coetzee had staggered him with a left-right combination. LeDoux tried to beat the count, but was declared out by referee Stan Christodoulou as he struggled to rise.

It was Coetzee's most impressive performance since he knocked out Leon Spinks in Monte Carlo three years ago.

Admittedly, LeDoux is well past his best. But it was the manner in which Coetzee won that impressed. Gerrie has gone back to basics, boxing from behind his jab—and he let the knockout come in its own time, without trying to force the issue.

There are those who claim Coetzee should have ended the fight earlier, and many insist the South African heavyweight champion still doesn't have a clue on how to finish a fight.

I believe such criticism is unwarranted. It was because Coetzee had adopted the stance and style of a fighter as opposed to a boxer that he has looked unimpressive in some of his recent fights.

Prodded by the press, Coetzee had sacrificed his boxing ability in an attempt to score spectacular knockouts, and the results were mostly disastrous.

Coetzee is essentially a boxer and, when he goes up on his toes and puts combinations together the way he did against LeDoux, he looks every inch a world class contender.

Styles decide fights—and LeDoux's aggressive approach suited Coetzee down to the ground.

James Tillis, the American heavyweight who has been named as Coetzee's next opponent at Sun City, is a different kettle of fish. Tillis even made Mike Weaver look bad in their recent WBA tittle fight in Chicago.

Trouble is, Tillis is a runner. He pecks with his punches like a hen in a farmyard. And his safety-first tactics make most of his fights one long yawn.

Clearly, Coetzee would be better off fighting fellows like Randy Cobb, Trevor Berbick, Mike Dokes, or Greg Page. But boxing politics is the stumbling block.

Cobb, Dokes, and Page are all controlled by Don King—and King is no friend of South Africa. Nor is he a friend of Bob Arum, who indirectly controls Coetzee. And so the chances of Gerrie meeting any of these three heavyweights must be remote.

Whatever happens, let's hope Coetzee sticks with the style that suits him best. His left jab was a joy to watch against LeDoux (despite a lame shoulder that later required surgery) and his right hand was certainly more effective than it had been against the inept Fossie Schmidt.

Nor should we overlook Coetzee's superb physical condition. Trainer Willie Lock deserves high praise for bringing Coetzee into the ring in the best shape we have seen him in for three years.

And though the fight went eight rounds, there was none of the usual Coetzee fade-out. If anything, Gerrie was moving better in round eight than in round one.

(03-27-82)

MOORE-WEIR
WBA Junior Middleweight Title

JOHANNESBURG SOUTH AFRICA—An American judge struck the first blow, an American boxer delivered the second—and, as a combination, the old one-two was altogether too much for Charlie Weir.

Making the first defense of his WBA junior middleweight title, Davey Moore knocked out Weir in 35 seconds of the fifth round before 40,000 stunned fight fans at the new Ellis Park rugby ground.

Moore had Weir on the canvas five times before applying the knockout blow, flooring the South African twice in the second round, once in the third, and twice in the fourth. The champion produced a classic combination of left to the body, right to the jaw to finish the fight in the fifth round.

This was the fight everyone seemingly wanted to stop. Mogens Palle, manager of Ayub Kalule, made the first move when he flew all the way to Johannesburg in a futile attempt to dissuade the WBA from sanctioning the bout.

The Danish Boxing Federation made the second move when they accused WBA vice president Mike Mortimer of having failed in his responsibility to protect the interests of Kalule and demanded an explanation of his conduct.

However, after all their posturing, Palle and the Danish Federation later switched their stance and, once Kalule had been guaranteed a shot at the winner within 60 days, pleaded for the Moore-Weir fight to go ahead.

It was left to Tony Ayala and his connections to really throw a spanner in the works, and the man who helped him rock the boat was U.S. Federal Judge Herbert J. Stern, who granted an injunction against the Moore-Weir fight.

For perhaps the first time in the history of the World Boxing Association, the world body was on the defensive—caught with their pants down, so to speak—and thrown into a panic by the U.S. court decision.

All kinds of conflicting and confusing statements were issued until it was officially anounced, at a late afternoon rules meeting on the eve of the fight, that, should the injunction remain in force and effect at the time of the contest, the fight would proceed as a non-title bout but under WBA championship regulations.

WBA executives and promoter Bob Arum breathed a sigh of relief when the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia granted a stay only hours before the champion and challenger were scheduled to strip for action.

But more drama was to follow when Moore, a man widely regarded as little more than an overblown welterweight, failed to make junior middleweight at his first two attempts. There was a look of absolute astonishment on Moore's face when his weight was recorded as 70,20 kg (154¾) on the electronic scale.

Amid a buzz of excitement, Moore removed his underpants and stepped back on the scale in the nude. But it made little difference. His weight was announced as 70,10 kg (154½).

Under WBA rules, Moore was entitled to two hours in which to make the weight. In fact, it took less than 40 minutes and when he stepped on the scale for the third time—again in the nude—his weight was recorded as 69,60 kg (153½). Weir had weighed-in at 68,70 kg (151½).

And then the rains came . . . forcing a 48-hour postponement of the fight and necessitating a second weigh-in. This time, both men made the weight with ease: Moore 69,10 kg (152¼) and Weir 68,10 (150).

After all the pre-fight drama, the bout itself was something of an anti-climax. Both men used the first three minutes as a reconnaissance round, probing with the jab and using the right to measure the other man.

Weir looked strangely listless and lethargic, while Moore bobbed and weaved and kept throwing left hooks that were taken on the gloves. Suddenly, the champion whipped a right to the side of Weir's head and the South African toppled to the canvas. Seconds later he was down again from another right to the head, and with the three-knockdown rule in effect, he damn near lost the fight there and then. Only courage kept him on his feet for the rest of the round.

Weir's reflexes were shot and he was guilty of telegraphing his punches at the start of the third round. Slowly, the South African came out of the fog but when he attempted to trade with Moore the American banged another right to the head and Weir was down yet again.

Weir appeared to hurt Moore with a left hook at the start of the fourth round, but when Moore fought back the South African made a pathetic attempt to hold. A three punch combination—left hook, right cross, and left hook—put Weir down for the fourth time, and when referee Luis Sulbaran waved the fighters back into action, Moore sent Weir sprawling

into the ropes with a barrage of blows.

The American needed only 35 seconds to finish the fight in the fifth round. As Weir attempted to throw a left hook, Moore beat him to the punch with a left to the body followed by a right to the jaw and Weir went flat on his back to be counted out.

(04-26-82)

BERT BLEWETT

BOZA-EDWARDS—VERDEROSA

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.—Defense wasn't exactly disregarded when Cornelius Boza-Edwards and John (The Heat) Verderosa collided in their junior lightweight brawl; it was totally ignored. Both men tore into each other like a couple of kamikaze pilots eager to meet their ancestors. When the rosin dust settled, 1:38 into the third round, Boza-Edwards was the winner via a knockout and another step closer to regaining the WBC 130-pound belt he lost to Rolando Navarrete in last year's stunning upset.

This internationally flavored match, televised live over CBS-TV from the Playboy Hotel & Casino, was a super slugfest, cramming an abundance of excitement into less than nine minutes of blistering action. It was short, but, while it lasted, sensational.

Verderosa, riding a 22-bout unbeaten streak (15 kayoes), entered the ring sporting a snazzy red robe, fringed with yellow flames. He tried to live up to his sizzling nickname, taking the fight to Boza-Edwards from the onset. Both missed a number of punches in the first few minutes, as John's rock-n-roll style kept him away from Cornelius' southpaw leads. Then they declared war with about 30 seconds left in the round, going toe-to-toe for the remainder of the session. Verderosa, 132, dug several hard combinations to the body to hold a slight edge.

It was also tit-for-tat for much of the second. Then Boza-Edwards gradually started to pull away. His punches carried more weight, and a nifty left uppercut jolted the Staten Island favorite near the bell. Corny had found his punch for the afternoon.

Boza-Edwards, 131¾, ignored a combo to the head at the beginning of the third and responded with another left uppercut that definitely hurt Verderosa.

"I spotted it as soon as his legs went," said Cornelius. "I said, 'Well, this guy is going.' I knew that if he came in, he'd find out that I was the better man."

The London-based Ugandan opened up with everything he had, flooring Verderosa with an accurate flurry of lefts and rights. John was in bad way. He took the count on his knees, looking out into the crowd, his arms resting on the middle strand of rope. Somehow, he bravely pulled himself erect as referee Larry Hazzard tolled seven.

Another volley promptly blasted Verderosa into the ropes and, as Hazzard hurried between them, John slid to the canvas. The count was mercifully abandoned when it became obvious that the twitching Verderosa was in need of immediate medical attention. Larry rightfully ruled a clean knockout. He could have counted to a hundred, anyway.

"The Heat" had blown his first crack at the big time, but took his medicine with grace.

"I don't make any excuses when I lose, because I don't want to hear any when I win," said John.

The significant win lifted Boza-Edwards' record to 34-3 with 30 stoppages. Many wondered how soon it will be before he challenges for his old title.

"(Rolando) Navarrete and (Bazooka) Limon are scheduled to fight in May," reported Cornelius' manager, Micky Duff. "We'll have to wait and see what happens. I don't want to go into a lot of excuses, but believe me, the Boza-Edwards that Navarrete won the title from is not the Boza-Edwards of tonight. He was going through a mental thing at the time, but he's become a completely different fighter since then."

Maybe so, but Boza-Edwards still leads with his chin. In a battle of face-fighters, the hardest puncher usually wins. If it had been Navarrete (instead of Verderosa) matching him punch-for-punch today, there might not have been such a jolly ending for the British invaders.

In the abbreviated prelims, Carmelo Negron, 122½, N.Y.C., stopped Darryl Jones, 120, Cincinnati, at the end of the sixth round in a scheduled 10. Tyrone Jackson, 128, N.Y.C., scored a one-punch kayo (right hand) over Fernando Ortiz, 129, Dominican Republic, at 1:39 of the second. Comebacking veteran Teo Osuna, 142, N.Y.C., TKO'd Ken Lomax, 145½, Phila., at 2:13 of the first. Stanford (Stretch) Thomas, 130, Trenton, N.J., won a unanimous decision over Greg Washington, 132, Elizabeth, N.J., six.

Alternate Referee—Joe Cortez.

Judges—Harold Lederman and Paul Cavaliere.

Promoter—Nancy Sciacca.

Attendance—1,000 (est.).

(04-24-82)

NIGEL COLLINS

LACIAR-HERRERA
WBA Flyweight Title

MERIDA, MEXICO—Former WBA flyweight champion Santos Laciar of Argentina regained the crown by stopping defending title holder Juan Herrera, Mexico, in round 13 of their title bout at Carte Clara Park.

Laciar showed a surprisingly sharp left jab to control the contest from the second session on, while Herrera, his right arm injured prior to round seven, relied on his right. What is amazing is that referee Carlos Berrocal of Panama had Herrera ahead, 118-116, after 12. Puerto Rican judge Samuel Conde had it a 116-116 draw, and Panamanian Marco Antonio Torres carded 118-116, Laciar.

Berrocal stopped it in the 13th when it became apparent that Herrera could not continue any longer. But the scoring! When are the WBA's officials going to pay attention to the fight—instead of the home town?

Mario DeMarco, Argentina, halted Manuel (Pulgarcito) Leal at 1:00 of the 10th round, junior flyweights.

Roberto Rubaldino, Mexico, kayoed Daniel Herrera, Juan's borther, in the third frame, junior feathers.

Promoters—Pronesa. Televised in Mexico, Venezuela, Argentina, and (on cable, SIN) in the U.S.

(05-01-82)

CARLOS IRUSTA

PAGE-YOUNG
USBA Heavyweight Title

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.—Time certainly hasn't robbed veteran heavyweight Jimmy Young of the ability to stink out any venue in the world. He was up to his old tricks again, clinching and stalling for 12 rounds in an abortive attempt to lift the USBA belt from Greg Page's ample waist. It was a horrible match, just about as exciting as watching paint dry.

Page, no ball of fire himself, never really went after Young, 226½, with anything resembling an all-out attack. He was content to safely peck away with jabs and an occasional right. It's a wonder that anyone in the ballroom of the Playboy Hotel Casino was awake to hear the reading of the official scorecards. It was enough to put a speed freak on the nod.

Young's plan, if you can call it that, was to back against the ropes, hoping to lure Page into a counter. Suffice to say, it didn't work.

"At times I tried to draw him into me, but it didn't work," said Young.

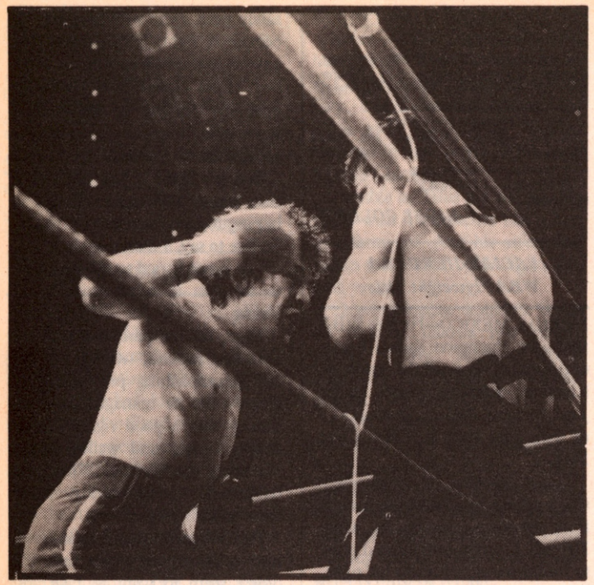
Page, for his part, did a lot of bouncing around, wasting energy, but accomplishing precious little. Every time he managed to catch Young with a good right, Jimmy simply turned and walked away, *ala* Jersey Joe Walcott. When this happened, Greg meekly stood there looking stupid.

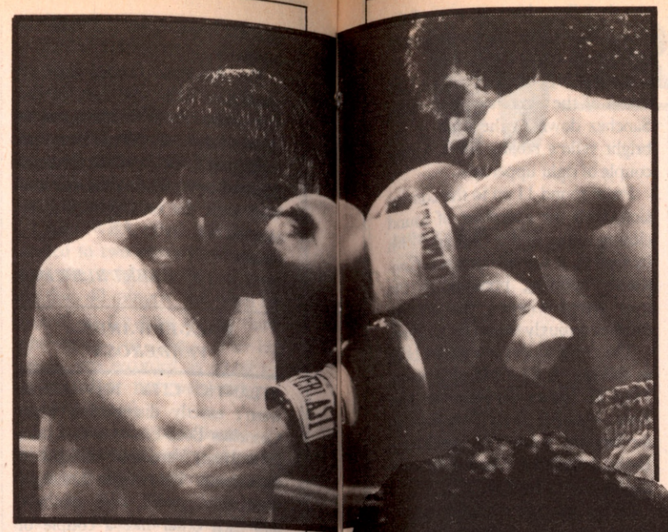
Page's superior hand speed kept him in front most of the way. He didn't seem to want to take any risks, an impressive showing apparently low on his list of priorites. His lackadaisical performance made Gerry Cooney's destruction of Young look very good in retrospect.

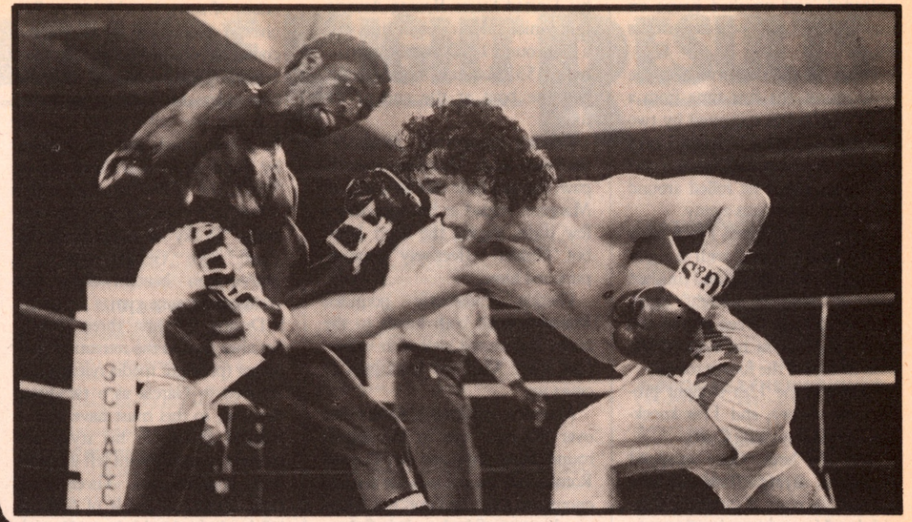
The only decent exchange of the fight came in the 10th, when a brief flurry from Young made Page angry enough to retaliate with a strong right to the head. Jimmy was slightly shaken, but he ploughed back in and they continued to trade after the bell, showing more spunk than they had in all their previous rounds put together.

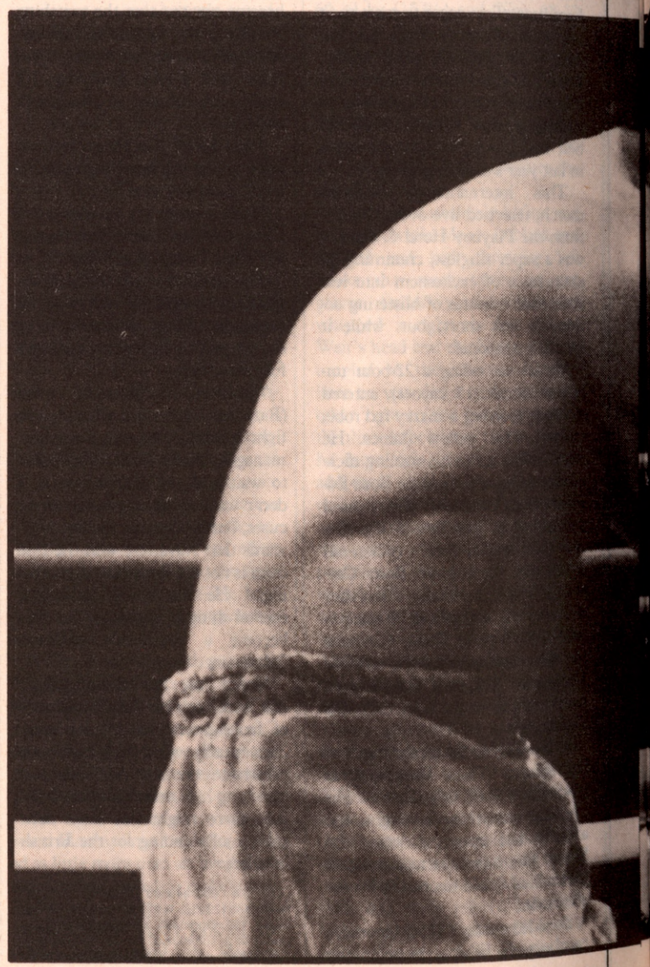
Another right to Young's head made the sweat fly in the 11th but it was the Philadelphian that tried for a big finish in the last round. With the crowd urging him on, the old trickster rallied a bit, connecting with a good right cross. It was all in vain, however, as Page, 229½, took the unanimous decision by scores of 57-53, 55-53, and a very close 57-56.

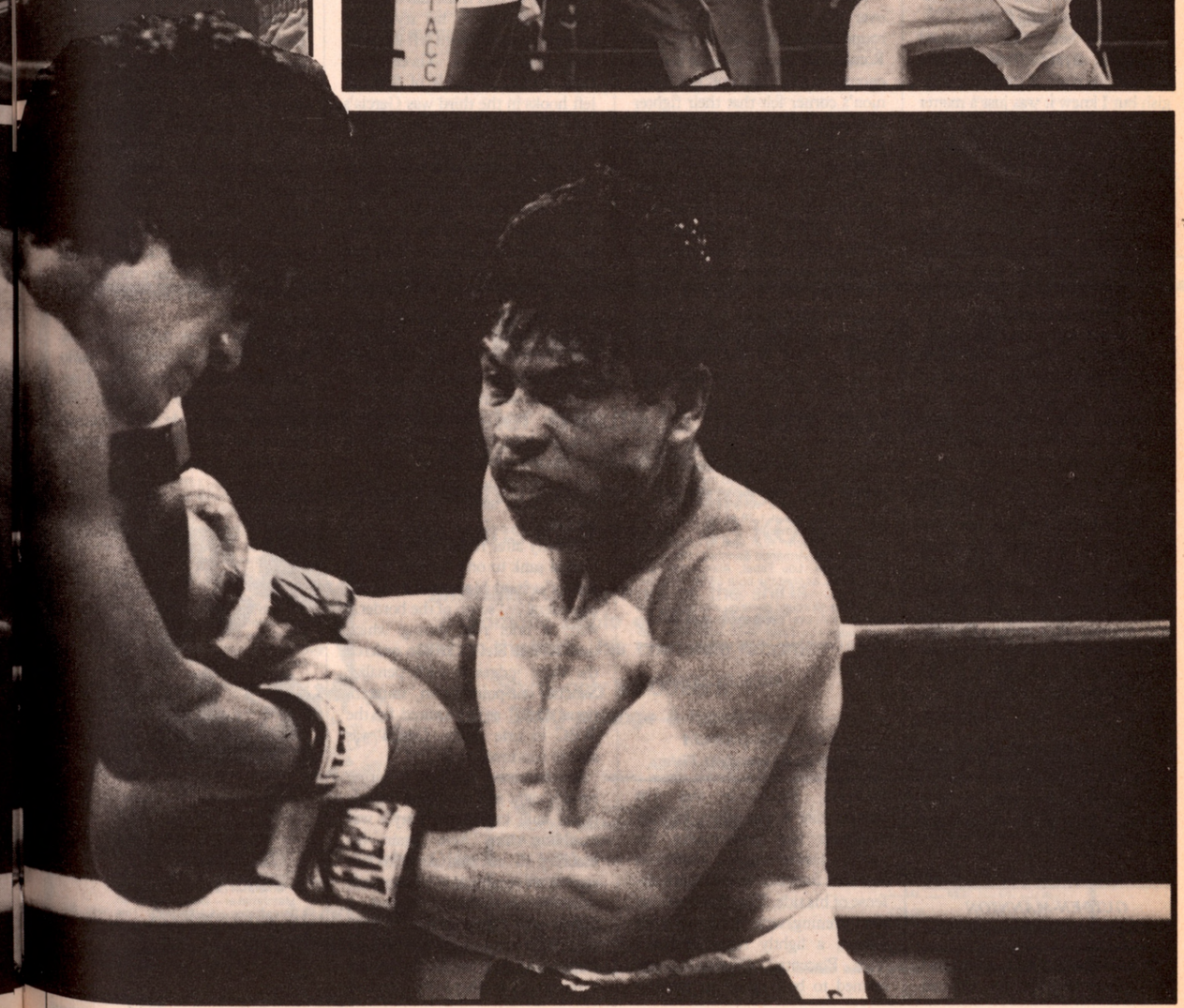
Prior to the match, Page had petitioned the WBA to move him *down* in their rankings because he didn't feel ready for a title shot. Many believe that this unprecedented move was engineered by Don King in an attempt to push his other heavyweight (Michael Dokes) into an early title shot ahead of Page. Needless to say, King denied this adamantly. Greg, recently split from long-time mentor Butch Lewis, also denied that











Above and Below: Boom Boom Mancini on his way to winning the WBA lightweight title from Art Frias; the bout lasted exactly two minutes and fifty-four seconds. Top Right and Right: Sanchez gives Jorge "Rocky" Garcia a boxing lesson in defense of his WBC featherweight crown. Top, far right: Boza-Edwards about to lecture John "The Heat" Verderosa on what a classic style feels like. Cornelius concluded the lesson with a third-round knock-out.

King was the power behind his wish to be demoted.

"I'll use Leon Spinks for an example," said Page, King at his ear. "He was rushed. If I rush right now, I can make the wrong decision. I want to learn every angle from A to Z. When I feel ready, I'll fight for the title." Okay Don, er, Greg. Whatever you say.

In the most interesting of the prelims, Jeff Sims, Miami Beach, TKO'd Floyd (Jumbo) Cummings, 221¾, Chicago, at 2:25 of the eighth. Sims, 210, put Jumbo over and out with a perfect right to the chin moments after a previous knockdown had been mistakenly ruled a slip by referee Tony Perez.

Jean Mugabi, 153¾, England (via Uganda), showed power blasting Curtis (Razor) Ramsey, 152¼, Portland, Ore., for two knockdowns and a TKO at 2:58 of the first round in their scheduled 10.

Odell Hadley, 158, Los Angeles, won a split decision over Al Styles, 155¾, over 10 boring rounds. Mitchell (Blood) Green, 213¼, N.Y.C., made quick work of Walter Ware, 207¼, Omaha, Neb., scoring a TKO at 2:48 of the first. Dale Jackson, 161, Chicago, won a unanimous decision over Billy Page, 158, Chicago, six. David Bey, 227, Phila., ousted Levarn Bumpers, 228, Minneapolis, with a clean kayo in 1:53 of the first. Jose Ramos, 141½, N.Y.C., drew over four with Kenny Willis, 138½.

The main event was televised live over ABC-TV.

Judges—Frank Brunette and Charles Spina.

Alternate Referees—Zack Clayton and Vincent Rianone.

Timekeeper—Roy Johnson.

Promoter—Don King.

Attendance—1,200 (est.)

(05-02-82)

NIGEL COLLINS

CURRY-FINCH
NABF Welterweight Title

LAS VEGAS, NEV.—It was a brilliant win and a new title for the winner, and a pathetic loss that may end a ring career for the loser.

Don Curry, 147, became the new NABF welterweight champion as he scored a brutal fourth round TKO over defending title holder Brue Finch, 145½, at Caesars Palace Sports Pavilion.

Curry droped Finch to the canvas three times before the final TKO at 1:10 of the 4th round in their scheduled 12.

It was the first fight for Finch since his loss by 3rd round kayo to Sugar Ray Leonard three months earlier.

Perhaps the loss to Leonard had done its psychological damage, but it was an awkward, an uncertain Finch who entered the ring this night, and found himself unable to cope with the lightning speed and potent punches of the never-defeated Curry.

The first two rounds were relatively close, with Finch using every tactic in his arsenal to keep his NABF crown.

But, in the third round, Curry

unloaded, and wreaked havoc on the hapless, and near-defenseless Finch.

Finch hit the deck twice in the third round, the first time from a push after being staggered by two hard rights. Then a left-right Curry combination sent him down a second time, where he rolled around the canvas in obvious agony.

Curry then dropped Finch early in the fourth round with a right-left-right combination, and finished him off with a straight right. Referee Richard Green put an end to the anguish as he stopped the bout at 1:10 of the fourth round.

This was the 12th straight professional victory, and 11th knockout, for the fast-rising Curry.

After the bout, Cury recapped the action, saying: "I should have warmed up more. I came out sluggish but I knew it was just a matter of time before I got to him. I knew his chin wasn't strong enough to take my punches. He really was hurt, and they should have stopped the bout after the third round".

Curry went on: "This was a big fight for me; and I'm relieved that it's over. I'm happy now that I have the NABF title; and can look forward to bigger things, like a shot at the world title when I'm ready."

Meanwhile, Finch's manager, attorney Keith Galliher, dissected the bout with logical and concise precision. "He took too many chances, and he got nailed too often. He didn't pace himself properly. He got hurt more today than he did in his fight with Leonard, I realize now that I should not have let him go out after the third round.

Galliher continued: "We are going to have to sit down with Bruce, and reassess his career. Perhaps Finch is not the calibre of the upper echelon fighters. When a man loses like he did to Leonard and Curry, there are deep-seated reasons.

"It's possible that this is the end of Bruce's fighting career. As his manager, I am not going to keep putting a man in the ring to get hurt like this."

GUIDEN-MANNION
USBA Junior Middleweight Title

In a companion bout, scheduled for 12, Gary Guiden, 154, retained his United States Boxing Association junior middleweight title with a four-round TKO over Sean Mannion, 153. Mannion's corner stopped the bout at the end of the fourth.

Guiden completely dominated the bout, while Mannion, a southpaw, showed little offensive action. Mannion leaped at his opponent a few times during the short bout; but Guiden effectively counterpunched him.

Guiden constantly pounded Mannion with both hands to the body, and scored well with uppercuts while Mannion attempted to cover up.

Mannion suffered a severe cut over his right eye in the fourth round. Ring physician Dr. Donald Romeo said the cut was not serious enough to stop the bout, but Mannion's corner felt that their fighter had taken enough punishment, and would not let him continue fighting.

The two championship bouts were hosted by Caesars Palace and by the ESPN for the delegates to the National Cable Television Association convention in Las Vegas. The event was by invitation only, and was followed by a sumptuous banquet for the delegates and media.

Four prelimary bouts, open to the public, were staged in the afternoon.

All were scheduled for six round, but only two went the distance.

Luis Santana, 149½, scored a TKO over Don Eskridge, 153½, at 1:22 of the second round. Santana, a native of the Dominican Republic, was battering his opponent when referee Glenn Powell stopped the bout.

Tony Fuliangi, 207, made a short work of his opponent, Mark Wills, 209, when he knocked Wills out at 1:28 of the first round. Referee: Glenn Powell.

Pepper Roach, 122, won a unanimous decision over Armando Sanchez, 126½. All three judges, Lou Tabat, Alan Adler, and Larry Clark, scored the bout 58-56. Referee: Dave Pearl.

Another six-round decision was won by Sal Mayran, 131, over Eddie Martin, 128. Scoring was: judge Lou Tabat:59-55; Alan Adler, 58-56, and Larry Clark, 58-56. Referee: Richard Green.

(05-04-82)

SHIRLEY NORMAN

SANCHEZ-GARCIA
WBC Featherweight Title

DALLAS, TEXAS—It was just another day at the office, another workman like performance for world featherweight champion Salvador Sanchez in the eighth defense of his title. The challenger on this evening was Jorge (Rocky) Garcia, a lightly regarded boxer from Placentia, California who seemed to be battling an identity crisis, of sorts, in addition to Sanchez. You see, Garcia had not only come under considerable scrutiny regarding his suitability as a title contender—he had lost to Ruben Castillo, the only world class foe he'd ever faced, and was unraked by *The Ring* Ratings Panel and the WBA; the WBC had him eighth—but he'd even adopted the nickname "Rocky" so as not to be confused with George Garcia, a journeyman bantamweight who trains at the same gym.

During the first three rounds, Sanchez stalked the retreating challenger (pre-fight media releases had referred to Garcia as a two-fisted dynamo, so this must have been a marked change in his style) and scored repeatedly with left jab-right cross combinations. Three sharp right uppercuts inside of Sanchez left hooks in the third was Garcia's only offense of consequence during this period.

It was midway through round four that the tide seemed to change a bit, with most ringsiders beginning to feel that Garcia would be able to last the distance. Sanchez was still forcing the action, and scoring more often, but Garcia began to fight back like a cornered wildcat when Salvador trapped him in a corner or along the ropes.

In rounds five and six, Sanchez continued advancing with that now familiar stoic expression on his face, at least twice having Garcia apparently ready to go—only to have the game challenger strike back with a solid lick or two in counter.

Shortly after round seven began, Garcia sank to one knee as the result of a hard blow which landed considerably "south of the border." After a brief rest, during which time referee Steve Crosson ordered the three judges to each penalize Sanchez one point for an "unintentional foul," as is required by the WBC in title fights, Garcia was able to continue.

It became obvious, during rounds eight and nine, that the one major fault in Sanchez's style was troubling him here again—his inability to cut the ring in half against an opponent who uses considerable movement. Against a fighter who comes straight at him e.g., Wilfredo Gomez and Danny Lopez, Sanchez excells. In against a mover, it's another story. Sanchez simply follows his man around the ring, too often letting his opponent score with counters.

Round 10, perhaps Garcia's best frame of the fight, saw him rattle Sanchez down to the soles of his bright yellow boxing shoes with a couple of right uppercuts.

From round 11 on to the conclusion, with the exception of round closing rallies in the 12th and 13th by Garcia, it was all Sanchez. Constantly applying pressure to the iron jawed Garcia, the champ finished strongly to seal his victory.

The three judges scored the bout as follows: A.D. (Spider) Bynum, 147-138; Moises del Razo and Jose Ruiz Velasco, both 146-141—all for Sanchez. Bynum is a resident of Dallas, with the other two men hailing from Mexico.

Garcia was something of an unknown quantity coming into this fight, but he wasn't "Rocky Who? at the conclusion. Obviously well schooled by his veteran trainer, Jackie McCoy, if Sanchez should opt to relinquish the title for another division in the future, the smiling delivery truck driver from California would have to be considered a serious contender for the vacant crown.

Sanchez's next defense will be against the tall Colombian, Mario Miranda—one of the WBC's so-called mandatory defenses. No mention was made of a rumored showdown with WBC lightweight king Alexis Arguello.

Ronnie Shields, 141¾, Port Arthur, Texas, won a unanimous decision over veteran Monroe Brooks, 141, Los Angeles, 10. Scoring: referee Dick Cole and judge Spider Bynum, both 99-91; judge Jack Woodruff, 99-90. Shields scored at will with slashing left jabs and hard rights to the body.

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Anthony (Wildcat) Wiley, Houston, TKO'd Al Tobe, Austin, at 2:43 of round three, middleweights (cut eye).

Timekeeper—A.C. Poe.

Promoter—Don King Productions.

Matchmaker—Bobby Goodman.

Attendance—5,500 (est.) This was the first pro boxing show staged in the new Reunion Arena.

Televised by HBO, witth Ross Greenberg and Larry Merchant providing the commentary.

(05-08-82)

C.A. JACKSON

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C.A. JACKSON

WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Greg Page decisioned Jimmy Young, 12
(Retained USBA Title)
Earnie Shavers stopped Joe Bugner, 2
Tony Fulilangi iced Mark Wills, 1
Randy Stephens, halted Dan Farmer, 5
Monte Masters knocked out Larry White, 1
Richie Kates stopped Pat Cuillo, 5
Joe Thomas iced Ronnie Rogers, 1
Jimmy Clark kayoed Lupe Guerra, 5
Kip Kane knocked out Ron Harkins, 1
Steve Allen halted Lindsey Page, 2
Mitch Green iced Walter Ware, 1
David Bey kayoed Lon Bumpers, 1
Jeff Sims halted Jumbo Cummings, 8
Frank Bruno knocked out Tom Stevenson, 1

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Jay Strickland kayoed Jim Green, 3
Chris Schwenke knocked out Jesse Avila, 1
Muhammad Anwar stopped Stan Olesby, 2
Carlton Benoit kayoed Geoff Rhymer, 6

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Nestor Flores stopped Felix Rivas, 2
Steve Traitz kayoed David Carter, 2
Al Mills halted Marco Larios, 2
Ricardo Bryant knocked out Tony Vega, 2
Frankie King outpointed Carlos Flores, 10
James Green decisioned Isidoro Gonzales, 6
Tony Sibson kayoed Jacques Chinon, 10
(Retained European Title)
Alex Ramos kayoed Wayne Caplette, 5
Odell Hadley decisioned Al Styles, 10
Dale Jackson outpointed Billy Page, 6

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
John Mugabi iced Curtis Ramsey, 1
Mario Maldonado kayoed Jimmy Batten, 1
Pete Seward decisioned Dale Staley, 8
Gary Guiden kayoed Sean Mannion, 4
(Retained USBA Title)
Luis Santana knocked out Don Estridge, 2
Derrick Drane stopped John Morgan/
Mustafa Shabazz, 5
Don King kayoed Jimmy Heair, 4

WELTERWEIGHTS
Donald Curry stopped Bruce Finch, 4
(Won NABF Title)
Simon DeLa Cruz halted Eddie Mitchell, 4
Mike Castor kayoed Jack Alvarez, 4
Kirkland Laing stopped Joey Mack, 7
Eduardo Rodriguez knocked out Jose Salazar, 9

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
Delroy Pierce kayoed Lee Halford, 7
Rudy Alpiza outpointed Ernesto Davis, 10
Simon Clark kayoed Cookie James, 5
Gary Gibson iced Pablo Rivera, 1
Victor Gordon knocked out Ricardo Mullins, 2
Roberto Munoz kayoed Lawrence Jones, 2
Joe Manley stopped James Singleton, 3
Teo Ozuna iced Ken Lomax, 1
Walter Clayton beat Gerry Beard, 8
Ted Michaelisyzm kayoed Bubba Scotts, 1
Fili Ramirez knocked out Carlton Sparrow, 2
Jose L. Hernandez decisioned Edel Borunda, 10
Job Calzadillas kayoed Jose Corral, 3
Ford Jennings iced Lazaro Pedroso, 1
Ronnie Shields outpointed Monroe Brooks, 10
Sanford Ricks decisioned Jorge Nina, 12
(Won New Jersey State Title)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Ray Mancini iced Art Frias, 1
(Won WBA Title)
Bobby Johnson beat Ken Carpenter, 8
Jesse Richardson kayoed Senovio Calderon, 3
Ken Bogner, knocked out Manuel Cordoza, 1
Efrain Olivo kayoed Willie Daw, 4
Carlos Bryant knocked out Carlos Chavez, 2
Lance Williams kayoed Glyn Rhodes, 7
Bubba Busceme knocked out De La Rosa, 9

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Alvaro Salazar kayoed Willie Shepard, 2
Antonio Parades beat Santos Moreno, 10
Boza-Edwards kayoed John Verderosa, 3
Tyrone Jackson knocked out Fernando Ortiz, 2

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Salvador Sanchez beat George Garcia, 10
(Retained World Title)
Jose Rivella kayoed Juan Escamilla, 2
Doug Trichel knocked out Angel Mendiola, 3
Ruben Moreno beat Ledo Martinez, 10
Bernabe Montanez kayoed
Waleed Rahman, 10
Pat Cowdell knocked out Tomas Diaz, 2
Francisco Fernandez kayoed Jose Santana, 2
(Central American & Caribbean Title)

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
Carmelo Negron kayoed Darryl Jones, 6
Harold Petty beat Sergio Reyes, 10
Richard Abila knocked out Carlos Flores, 4
David Johnson iced Mario Rodriguez, 1
Aaron Lopez kayoed Enriquez Flores, 6

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Jesse Sierra kayoed Ruben Chavarria, 2
Ernie Chavez beat Frank Hesia, 8
Antonio Perez iced Vicente Hernandez, 1
Ivor Jones kayoed Jimmy Bott, 6

FLYWEIGHTS
Santos Laciar kayoed Juan Herrera, 13
(Won WBA Title)
Joey Olivo knocked out Sylvester Guerrero, 5
Jose Torres kayoed Charlie Magri, 9

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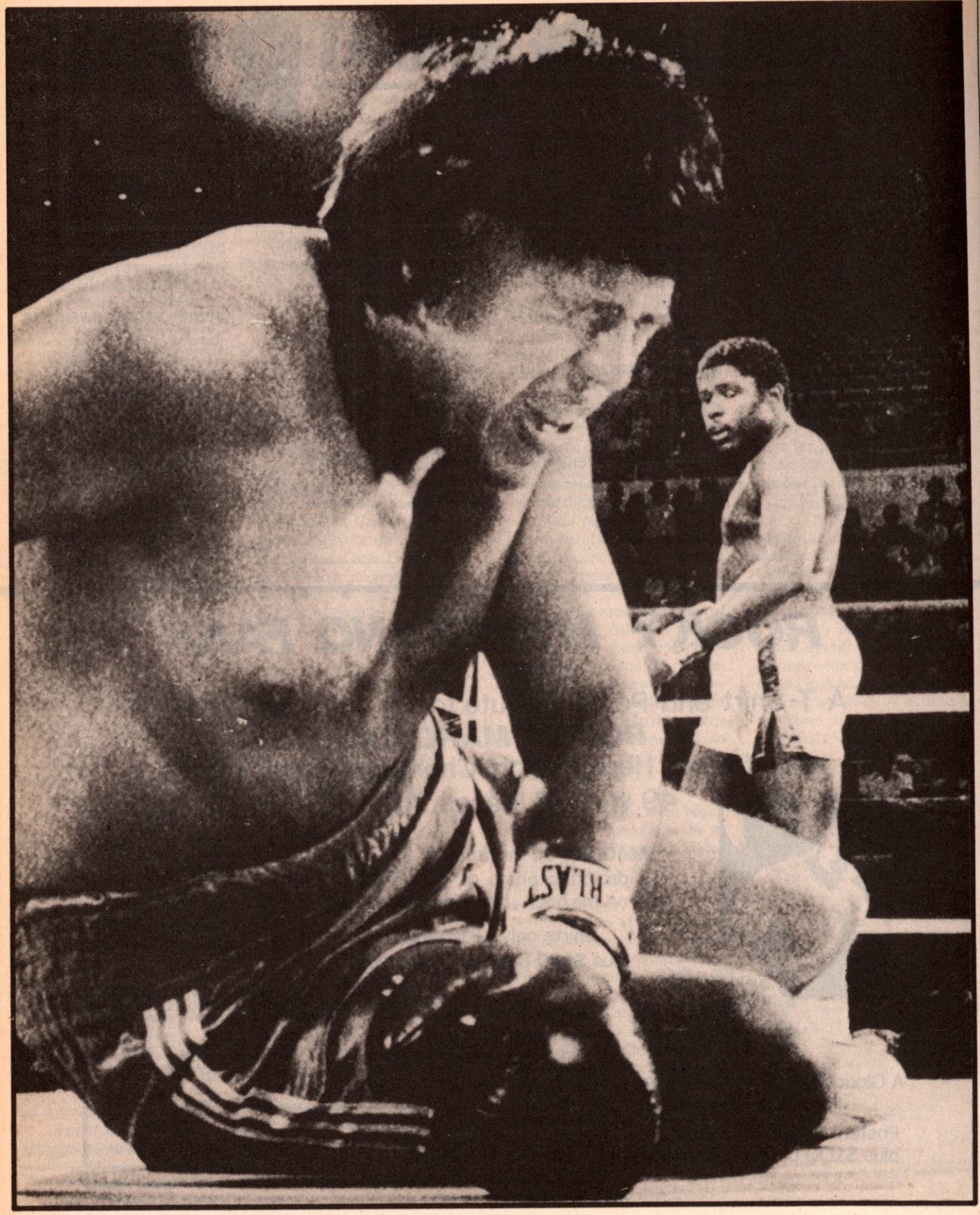
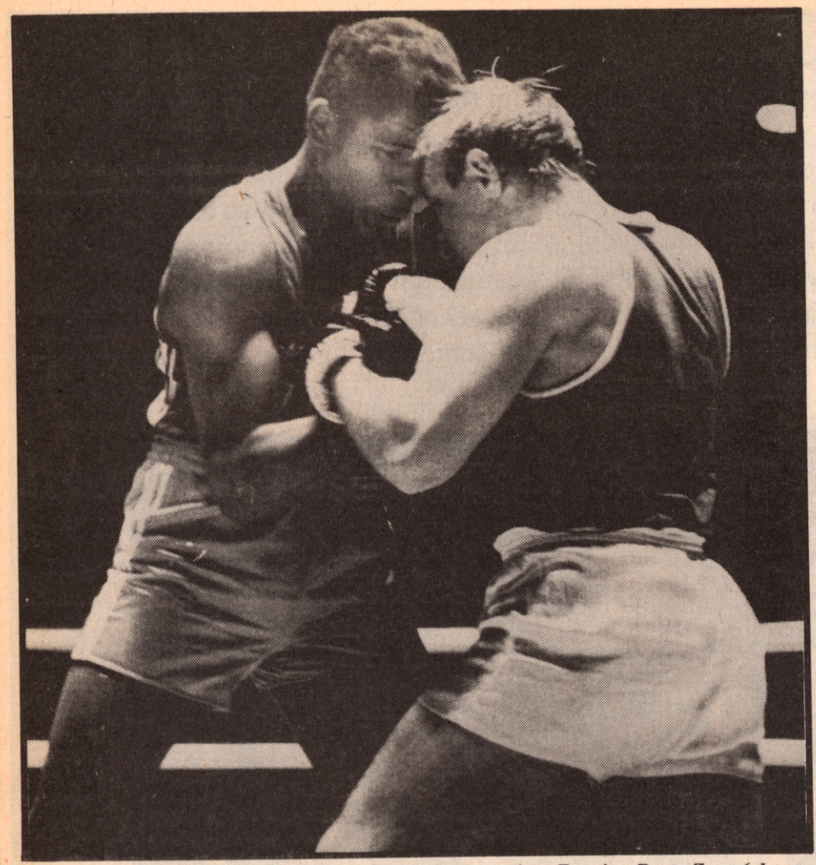

HEAST

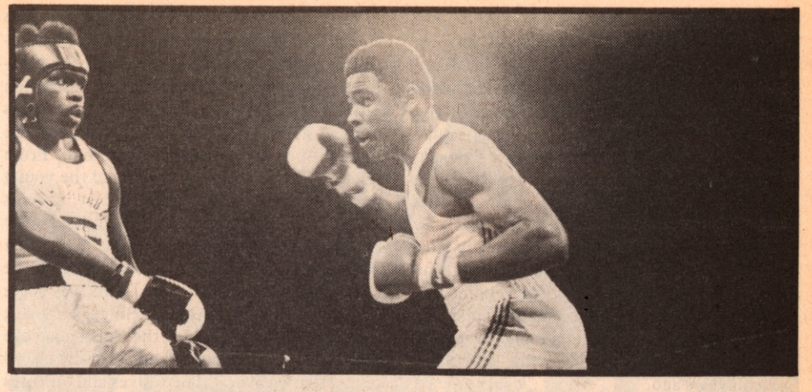
FLASHBACK: May 29, 1975, Louisville, Ky. The Muhammad Ali School of Boxing. The man wearing the black patent leather shoes, stripped to the waist, is the man for whom the school is named and the reigning heavyweight champion of the world. The big kid all decked out for more serious boxing is Greg Page. Two of his uncles fought the former Cassius Clay when he was an amateur. And now, he's about to get into the ring with him himself. ¶ Ali is in his hometown to fight an exhibition with old sparring mate and one-time World Boxing Association Champion Jimmy Ellis. The boxing school named for him, a charitable organization funded by Kentucky Fried Chicken-man John Y. Brown, is located in a junior high school in the city's West End. Since it's to be a tour-stop on Ali's mad dash about the city, somebody figures Ali might want to show off a bit. ¶ Somebody else remembers Greg Page. ***By DICK FENLON***

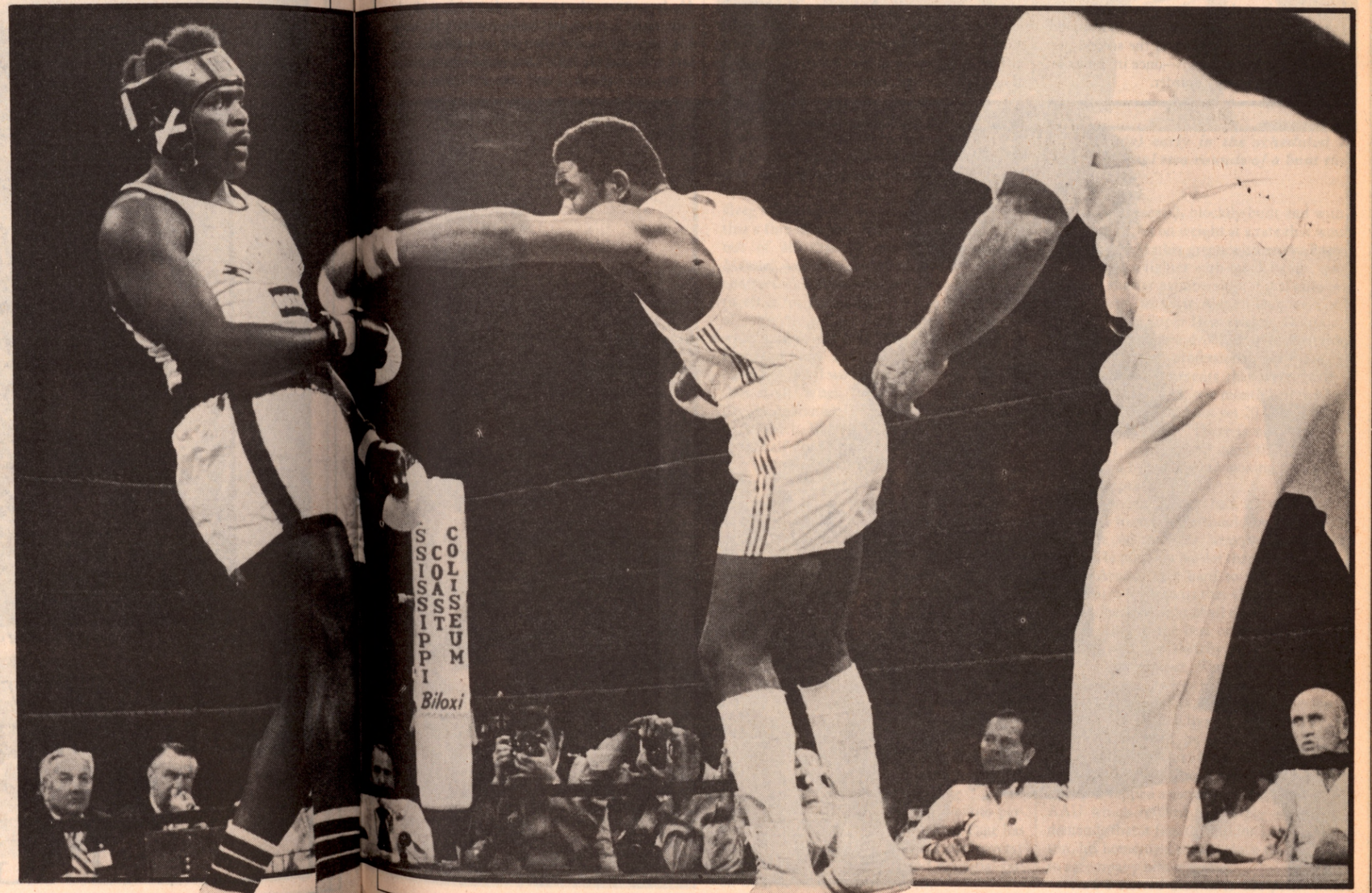
The short and long of Page's career: Alfredo Evangelista on the floor in two (left) and Jimmy Young on his feet for twelve.

[THE LOWDOWN ON THE HIGH ASPIRATIONS AND LOW MACHINATIONS WHICH EMBROIL THE LOUISVILLE HEAVYWEIGHT.]

PAGE ONE STORY







Page the Amateur: Page shows his winning form against Russian Peter Zaev (above, 1977) and countryman Tony Tubbs (three photos on right, 1978).

JUST 16, HE IS AN AMATEUR WITH ONE year's experience. But he is not an ordinary 16—standing over 6 feet tall and weighing more than 200 pounds. And when he picks up the phone he answers eagerly. "Sure," he says, "I want to challenge a pro any day."

Page arrives in fighting gear. Ali, touring in a conservative business suit, strips to the waist while keeping up a steady stream of chatter. "Put the headgear on him good," he says, glancing sideways at Page. "I don't need one 'cause I don't get hit."

Ali is joshing. It is going to be good, clean fun. Jimmy Ellis, standing at ringside, is not so sure. "A pro—you always know he's going to lead with his left, do the proper thing," says Ellis. "But an amateur—he's not going to set up or anything. He's going to throw them from left field, from right field, from anywhere."

Somebody rings the bell, and the kid wades in. The kid is taking it seriously. For two round, he flails at the champion. At first, the champ takes it in stride—putting up with young smart-asses goes with the terrritory. But at the end he is snapping a few hard left jabs, too.

"It was really something," Page said later. "For the first time, just when you're getting started, to get in with the champion. I was hitting Ali with shots that I didn't know it was possible for me to hit him with. Some heckuva shots. At first, he was clowning around. Then it turned into a fight. They kept shouting, 'Ali—he's just a kid.' But we were knucklin'. We were fighting."

■

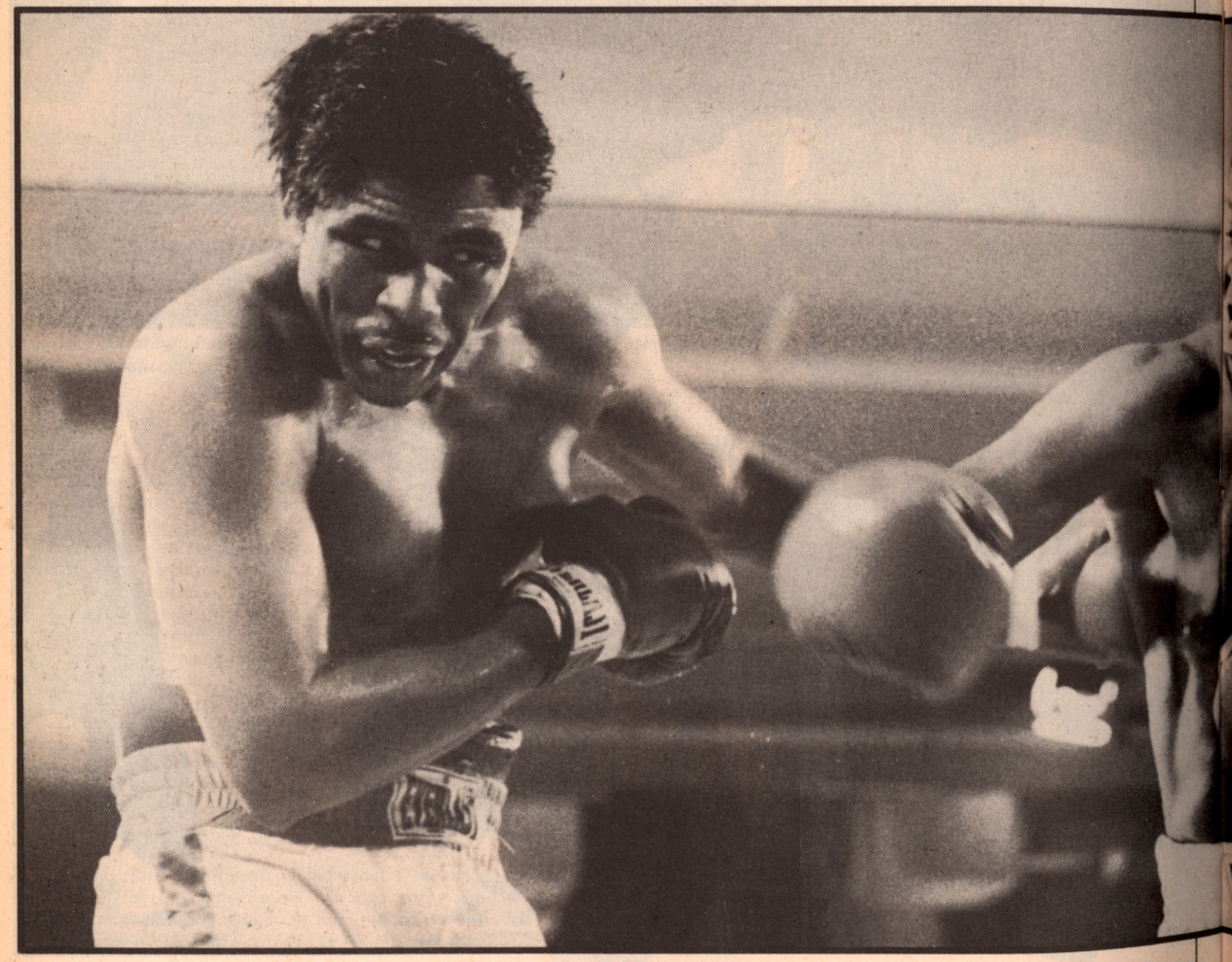
The pen writes, and moves on. Ali, his last hopes for catching youth in a bottle having evaporated, is presumably gone from the ring now and forever more. Greg Page, once the kid, is 23, and a man. In his dreamier days, he had hoped to be heavyweight champion of the world by this time, beating Ali's timetable to the top. Reality has a way of getting into the way of timetables. Page now figures that his first shot will come within the first three months of 1983.

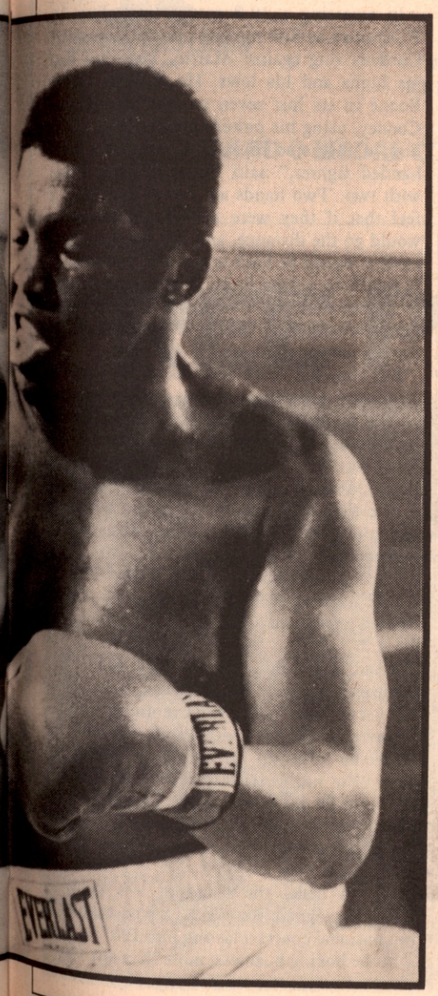
An arrangement with Don King is designed to guarantee it. "We agreed in late December to work with King," says J. Bruce Miller, who is the County Attorney for Jefferson County, Ky., and also the legal representative for Page, along with Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Ken Anderson and Denver Nuggets basketball center Dan Issel. "You might as well accept some reality and go about your business and just don't give an arm and a leg when you accept it. And that's basically what we've done. We've struck a bargain on favorable terms to both parties. Greg gets his title shot within the first three months of 1983, and King gets to stay on as a major promoter. We couldn't have made this agreement several years ago."

We leave it to the moving pen to determine if the parties of the first part will, indeed, live happily ever after. A party of the second part who won't is Butch Lewis—once in, now out, and screaming bloody murder.

Visiting Louisville on business for Bob Arum of Top Rank, for whom he worked until a celebrated blowup at the time of the Ali-Leon Spinks return match in New Orleans in 1978, Lewis first got word of the precocious Page at about the time that the kid and Ali duked it out in Louisville's West End. From then on, Lewis carefully cultivated the young fighter, as well as his father, Albert, and his uncle, Dennis. When Dennis, then the family spokesman, announced in July, 1978, that Page was giving up the idea of fighting in the 1980 Olympics to turn pro, Lewis was there to shepherd his career along. But, says Lewis, just when he maneuvered the unbeaten Page into position for a title fight with WBA champion Mike Weaver, "The wolves and vultures start laying around and nipping at my feet. I understand Don came in and offered to buy Greg's mother a new home, and to give Greg a farm, and quite a few hundred thousand dollars just to sign. Ever since the father died (Albert Page, 48, died in May, 1981 of cancer), the greed syndrome set in. They forgot what I did for them. They forgot me shoveling snow outside Louisville Gardens just to get a fight in. They forget me taking him to Philadelphia to fight before 200 people, and losing my tail, just so he can get a fight in. They forget all those days. They're just thinking about now. Don's painting the picture and they're already salting away their millions of dollars in the vault and they're driving around in their Rolls-Royces and private planes. I can see the picture that Don paints. He's good at that.

"Don King, he's just like a guy who rapes and pillages other people after they do the work. It's like I'm a farmer and he's a farmer. He lays across the street underneath a shade tree while I plant the seeds, nurture it, keep the bugs off it, and then all of a sudden the tree's up and the fruit's out and Don wants to come and harvest it and take it to market."





Miller executed the contract with King after Page returned from the Bahamas, where he knocked out Scott LeDoux. That fight was promoted by Lewis, who claims to have an exclusive contract to promote Page's fights through the remainder of 1982. When Page signed with King, Lewis went to court in New York State and obtained a temporary restraining order barring Page from fighting for anyone else. The restraining order was subsequently dissolved. At the latest report, Lewis was contemplating further court action. Meantime, King arranged for Page to fight against Jimmy Young, at a bore-snore he won in 12 at Atlantic City.

■

"They're just trying to get a fight in before it comes to a head," said Lewis. "They know I've got a contract and I'm going to win. They want to buy me out, they're going to have to go to seven figures. SEVEN figures. They've offered me money, but I turned it down. If Greg's willing to let his career go to pot, that's fine with me. He's the one who suffers out of all this. Weaver's manager, Don Manuel, was prepared to come in and sign a contract with Page because I had gotten a deal together for a May fight. It had the makings of everything. The Pages, they don't know what time of day it is. You know what King promised him? That he'd get a title shot by March of '83. I wondered: Did he want a title shot at all. When I'm telling them, 'You've got one guaranteed by June.' "

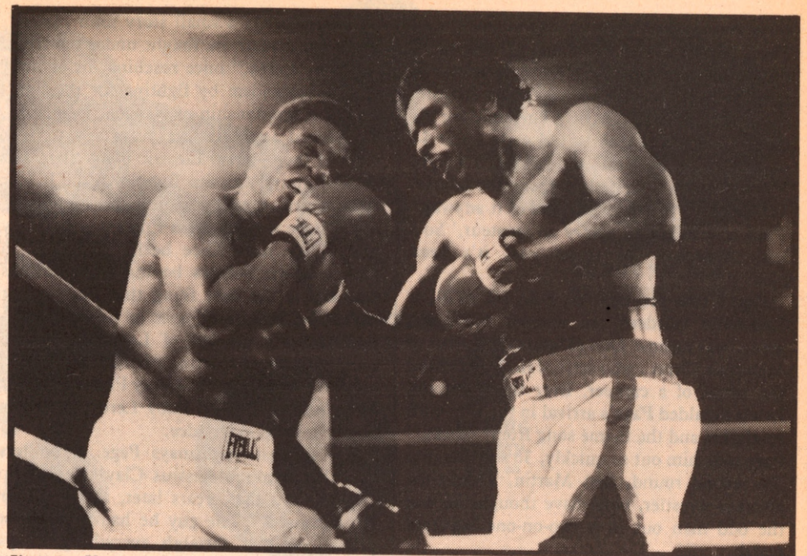
To which, Bruce Miller says, "So what?"

"A half dozen guys could win that (WBA) title and after Greg did it, I don't know what he really would have now," says Miller. "Weaver hasn't established any credibility. Even if Greg got Weaver's title, I don't know that it would get him a quicker bout with Larry Holmes, even granting that Holmes would even want to fight him to begin with."

Who knows? But this can reasonably be agreed upon: With Page in tow, if this is where he ultimately proves to be, Don King strengthens his hand, controlling World Boxing Champion Holmes and Michael Boxes and Page, ranked as the No. 3 and 4 challengers in *Ring's* international ratings.

"Greg has lost all loyalty to Butch and intends to stay with King," said Miller. "Lewis had no clout to begin with and Greg won't ever fight for him again. Even if he wins in court, he isn't going to win anything."

To put the litigational tug-of-war into perspective, this isn't the first time that Page has been the center of dispute—the controversy centering not on his talent and potential but on what he should do with both.



HOLLIS STEIN, DON KING PRODUCTIONS

Jimmy Young takes a hard right to the face (above) early in the scheduled 12 rounder. Young came back strong (lower left) in the final two rounds of a bout that was as exciting as watching grass grow.

Standing 6-feet-2, blockily-built and with a tendency to put on weight at a rate that would turn Buster Mathis green with envy, Page is nonetheless a fighter with quick hands, quick feet and charter membership, if it should ever come about, in what Angleo Dundee would call the "New Super Heavyweight Division."

Boxing folk were drooling over Page long before he turned professional. Here are just three of the assessments that were made of him in June of 1978, one month before he decided to turn pro and not yet 20 years of age.

Angelo Dundee: "There is no telling how good he'll get. I see all good things for this kid. He's a heckuva good looking fighter and a fine prospect."

Gil Clancy: "When he's 22 or 23—if he dedicates himself—he should be right at the top—one of the best heavyweights in the world. He punches harder than Ali punches."

Bob Arum: "It's hard to tell with young kids, but it looks to us that Greg Page may be the best heavyweight of all time."

According to the best of available records, all of which are sketchy, Page fought 101 times as an amateur, Won 90—55 by knockout—and was twice national AAU heavyweight champion. In 1976, at 17, he lost to Dokes in the U.S. Olympic tryouts. For one reason or another, he never fought Teofilo Stevenson, the three-time Olympic heavyweight champion from Cuba. His decision to turn pro capped a simmering dispute with the AAU which refused to comply with Page's demands that it foot the bill for Leroy Edmerson, his hometown trainer since the age of 16, to accompany him overseas.

"And I started getting to the point where

three rounds didn't do nothing for me," said Page, "So when me and the AAU fell out, I decided to turn pro. But the main reason is that the AAU approached me about fighting Stevenson. I talked to ABC. They told me if I fought Stevenson, they would make $3 or $4 million off it. So I told the AAU, 'If I fight Stevenson, I want a percentage of the money. You're going to give Cuba half of it anyway.' They told me, 'No, you're an amateur.' So I said, 'Goodbye, be seein' you, it's been nice.' "

Page's first pro fight on Feb. 16, 1979, at Louisville Gardens, an ancient 6,000-seat arena, was against Don (Madman) Martin of Memphis, Tenn., who arrived in town behind the wheel of a camper. Ever the promoter, Lewis heralded Page's arrival in the ring with spotlights and the theme song from "Rocky." Page took him out so quickly, 36 seconds into the second round, that Martin, a one-time amateur wrestler, must have thought he was the odd man out in a two-on-one tag-team match.

Since then Page has remained unbeaten by disposing of the assortment of stiffs that all promising young heavyweights encounter, interspersed by a few genuinely formidable opponents. His fighting weight has fluctuated from 224, his weight for his professional debut, to 250. If he has sometimes caused his critics to wonder about his commitment to excellence—Page would often seem just as content to ride his bicycle or shoot hoops on the basketball court as train and spar—he also has shown enough to warrant grand speculation on just how good he might someday be. His best performance was against Marty Monroe on April 11, 1981 at Monticello, N.Y. The 195-pound Monroe was *Ring's* No. 6-rated contender at the time, and Page, who fought at 226, was ranked eighth. Page caught Monroe early with a left hook. The fight was stopped—the first time that Monroe had not gone the distance in a 22-2-1 career—after five rounds.

Angelo Dundee, who was there said, "I fell in love with him. I was concerned, because I felt the other guy was going to hit him on the chin. But Page reverted to steadiness, which he had to do. He boxed the guy. He fought a very smart, heady fight. He didn't jump in and get himself nailed. He didn't showboat, like he has before. But that's all going to go away. It just takes time.

"What's going to happen with this kid is that the better talent he fights, the better he's going to look. It's easier to fight good talent. Coming up, when you fight easier guys, you have a tendency to ease up."

"He looked beautiful," said his trainer, Leroy Edmerson. "He did everything I wanted him to do—left hook, left jab, one-two and one-two-three. He was mentally and physically ready. You can't beat him when he has both of those things going."

The trainer is a small story unto himself. From Cincinnati, he fought under the name of "Baby Leroy," once reaching the summit of professionalism by fighting for the lightweight championship of Nevada. Edmerson, 51, moved to Louisville years ago to seek work at the General Electric plant there and began training amateur fighters at the Baxter Avenue gym, a walk-up loft just east of downtown. Page was 15 when Edmerson first saw him. They have since been inseparable, a matter which bothers boxing traditionalists who figure the best thing that Page might have done for himself once he turned professional was to get out of Louisville, where competition and sparring partners are sparse, move to a boxing hotbed—say Philadelphia or New York—and drop Baby Leroy for somebody like Angelo Dundee.

The suggestion dismays Page. It bothers him that a young Cassius Clay switched to Dundee and that, years later, so did Sugar Ray Leonard. "The guy he had in the first place took him through everything," says Page, referring to Leonard. "And so did all those other trainers of other fighters, who took them by the hand and guided them through everything. Well, Dundee can't show me nuthin'. NUTHIN'. Eddie Futch can't show me nuthin'. Carmen Graziano can't show me nuthin'. These famous trainers can't show me nuthin' because it's like this: All the fighters they get already have been handmade by another trainer. The only thing they're doing is getting in there, eating up the glory, getting their share of the purse, and that's *IT*. I been with Leroy all these years and I'll say the same thing I've always said: None of 'em ever going to get him out. If something ever happened to Leroy, I'd quit fighting. I'd *QUIT*."

No doubt, Edmerson does know his way around a ring. What some people looking on wonder, however, is whether he is tough and demanding enough to push Page the way he needs to be pushed. When his fighter came in at a plump 235 for his second-round knockout of Alfred Evangelista on June 12, 1981, in Detroit, Edmerson was the first to jump to his defense. "I don't care what they say, the main thing is that he's comfortable," said Edmerson. "I'm satisfied with the weight he's carrying. It doesn't bother me at all."

But Edmerson also is the man who has helped keep the flame burning inside Page. "At first," says Page, "our goal was to make the '76 Olympics. And then after that, I talked about quitting. But Leroy would say, 'Remember, you're a millionaire, but you just don't have the money."

On the weighty matter of his waistline, Page is defensive almost to the point of touchiness. "People keep saying I should lose weight," he says. "Why? For what? My little bitty brother weighed 165, 170 pounds when he was 11 years old. I could fight at 500 pounds and still be quick.

"Or is it fast? He's fast, but he's not quick—that's what they were all saying about me for a while. And I can't punch either, you know. They said I couldn't punch. That's what I did what I did in the interview room after the Monroe fight. 'Guess what?" I said. 'You were all WROOOONNGGG.' "

As Ali did, Page has a knack of simultaneously dazzling and horrifying those in the know. He hangs his left low and it dismays purists such as Dundee. He throws occasional bold punches. He dances and sometimes clowns. And he defends all of it.

"There's a lot of ways I set fighters up," he says. "Anything you see me do in the ring, I do for a reason. I throw a left hand and I drop my right hand for a reason. I throw a crazy left jab for a reason. I throw a shot under for a reason. I don't throw punches just to be throwin'. If I throw them, I throw them to score."

In amassing a 19-0 record (including 16 KOs) since he first stepped into the Louisville Gardens ring against Martin, Page has had his highs and his lows. He stopped Leroy Boone in six just seven months after Gerry Cooney, using his power-hammer left, KOed him in the same round. "Cooney is a one-handed fighter," said Boone. "Page fights with two. Two hands are better than one. I feel that if they were to fight, it probably would go the distance, and if it went the distance it would be hard to say who would win. It would be a good fight. When it gets down to the late rounds, I would have to go with the two-handed fighter. Page? He's as good as any fighter coming up today."

But Page has twice been taken the distance by George Chaplin, winning each by controversial decision. Both bouts were promoted by Butch Lewis. Part of the rupture with Lewis is traceable to the conclusion made by Bruce Miller that Page had no business being in the ring with him the second time in an everything-to-lose and nothing-to-gain arrangement.

"Lewis just has no clout," says Miller, "and Chaplin was the only opponent he could find. The second Chaplin sort of damaged Greg."

Meantime, while Page skips down the primrose path with King, Lewis, the rejected party, cries that justice will eventually be his.

Anything they do with Page, my damages are going to go up further and further," he says. "I'm not worried about him fighting. I just hope he don't lose. If he's prepared to let his career go down while he goes up to 300 pounds, that's *his* business. I can stand it if he can stand it."

But to make the standing less painful, Lewis has signed Tony Tubbs to an exclusive promotional contract lasting into 1987.

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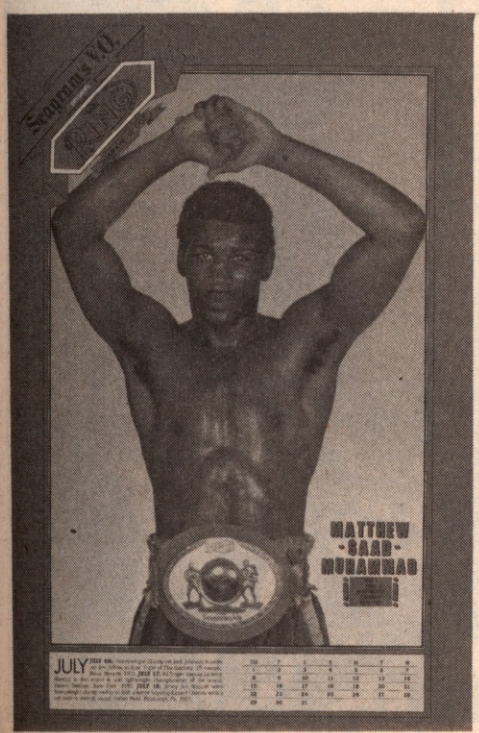

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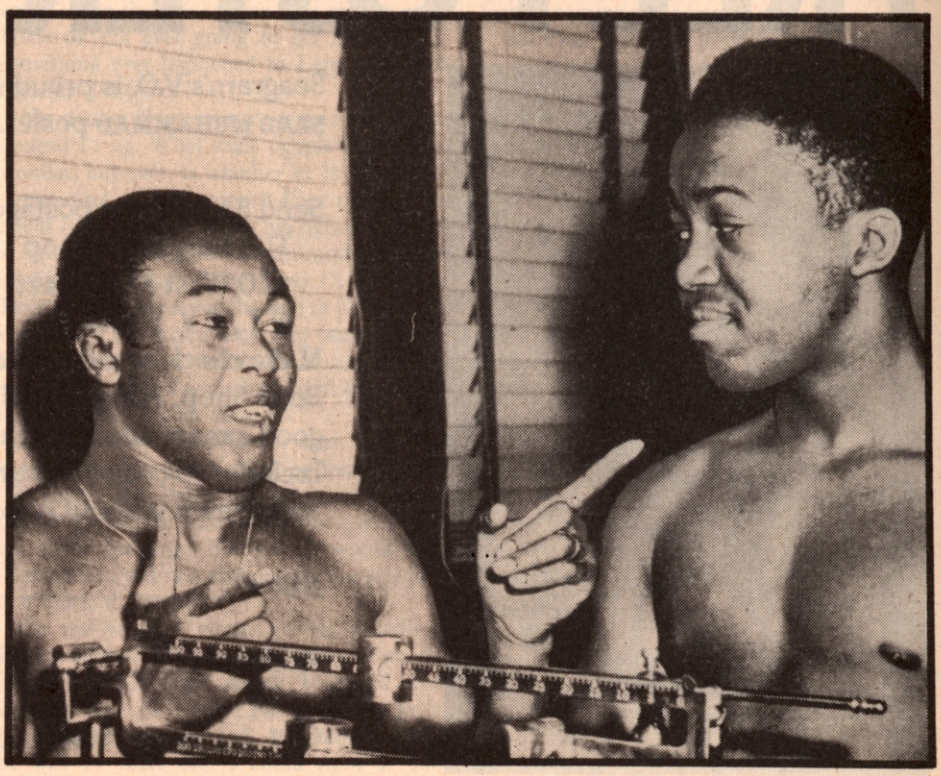
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

EUGENE (SILENT) HAIRSTON



WHEN EUGENE (SILENT) HAIRSTON WAS a contender in the 1950's, he had more going against him than just champions who avoided him. Eugene Hairston was deaf.

A case of spinal meningitis at the age of two left him without three-quarters of his hearing and speech. Now approaching 51 years of age, Gene's mind is as sharp as his combinations were in 1952. That was the year *The Ring* ranked him as the number two contender for Sugar Ray Robinson's middleweight title.

But the promised title shot never came, and today Hairston's face still bears more than a minor hurt when reeminded of it. Despite being a victim of boxing politics, he is always willing to discuss it.

"Boxing never had it so good," said Hairston through his interpreters, Raul Rodriquez III and Joe Pezzulo, when asked about the enormous purses that fighters command today. But when asked who was the best welterweight and middleweight he had ever seen perform, he paused for a minute and replied slowly, "Me."

The ring career of Hairston dates back to the time when, in defense of his shoe shine stand, he was forced to give some punk a real shiner. Dropping out of school after the eighth grade, Gene buffed shoes to help support his three younger sisters and brother. One day on a Bronx street corner, a youth approached him for his daily earnings and Gene polished him off.

One on-looker was impressed enough with his handiwork that he took the kid to the Tremont Athletic Club where he met Mike Miele—who later became his manager while brother Joe Miele acted as trainer.

Former three-time lightweight champ Jimmy Carter, who trained at the gym, became Gene's closest friend while teaching him

some of the tricks of the Sweet Science. As an amateur, Hairston lost only once in 61 fights and scored 35 knockouts. He took the New York Golden Glove 147-lb. open title, the AAU crown, and the inter-city championship against Chicago.

Gene's pro career began with 15 consecutive wins before he dropped an eight-round decision to Tom Parks on May 26, 1948.

Always an exciting fighter, he fought every fight as if it were his last, chasing his opponent in hot pursuit. In classic ring campaigns, Gene won and lost 10-round decisions to Kid Gavilan and Laurent Dauthuille, fought a 10-round draw and dropped a close 10-round decision to Jake LaMotta, and bested Artie Towne, Lester Felton, and Lee Sala in 10-rounders.

This exciting boxer-puncher boxed ten-round draws with Joe Rindone and Robert Villemain, lost decisions to Rocky Castellani, Walter Cartier, and Charley Humez, and was stopped by Carl (Bobo) Olson, Johnny Bratton, and Ted Pritchard, stopping Pritchard in a return match.

On the plus side, he stopped Paddy Young in two, Billy Kilgore in six, and blasted out future middleweight titleholder Paul Pender in three—a thought which caused him to break into laughter, thinking of Pender's ultimate victory over Robinson.

In evaluating his opponents, "LaMotta was the toughest, Gavilan was the smartest, and Al Mobley (whom he fought three times), was my most troublesome rival."

The closest Hairston ever got to a title shot was when he boxed Villemain and LaMotta. In each case, the winner was slated to get a crack at the title then held by Robinson. As fate would have it, Hairston boxed draws with Robert and Jake, giving Sugar Ray the option to defend the belt against Carl (Bobo) Olson.

In a move to side track Olson's title bid, Hairston challenged him at the old Madison Square Garden on August 27, 1952. A gash above Hairston's right eyebrow caused the bout to be stopped in the sixth round.

To compound the loss to Olson—who later gained the throne left vacant by Robinson—the New York State Athletic Commission suspended Gene's license because of serious nerve damage to Hairston's right eye. As in most cases of this nature, other states complied with New York's ruling.

Gene took his act to Paris instead, to fight European middleweight champ Humez.

"I took the fight," said Hairston, "because the winner was assured a bout with then champion Randy Turpin. That fight was the brightest moment in boxing for me because the people of France treated me as royalty." He lost a 10-round decision but, from all reports, he took the show—as well as the favor of the fans.

Gene Hairston never fought again. At 22, he was labeled washed up. He never did officially retire, but the various commissions would not reinstate his license. Gene's 5'9" muscular body was seen 13 times on television, and his record stood at 45-13-5 with 24 knockouts.

Boxing afforded Gene celebrity status, including flashy clothes, specially-built autos, and the means to transform his parents' home into a 12-room mansion.

He jokingly gestures to his right eye and the scar tissue that is his permanent memory of a ring career. Included on the walls of his home is a plaque commemorating his induction into the American Athletic Association of the Deaf Hall of Fame in 1975 and a black marble statue which reads: "1951, Silent Eugene Hairston, Welterweight Contender. From the Scranton Association of the Deaf."

Today, Gene enjoys the peaceful life with his wife, Aline, and a job with UPS. His spare time is consumed with plans for a Eugene Hairston Boxing Club. "Raising funds has been difficult, but I won't throw in the towel," says the man who, over the years, has worked with youths in P.A.L., refereeing matches, acting as a second, and judging fights.

Like his counterpart, Mario D'Agata, the only deaf mute to hold a world crown, Hairston carved a place for himself in boxing history. Most people don't know it, but it was Hairston's inability to hear the bell that caused the Garden management to install red lights in the corners of the ring to indicate the end of a round, an innovation still used today.

Hairston still keeps his own Hall of Fame at home. Aline brought out the gold satin robe, awards, photos, writeups, and other souvenirs. His relatives store his old fight clips.

But even with all his accomplishments, Hairston does have one regret: today he does not attend any boxing bouts. Just as with his dreams for a world title shot, he can only sadly say, "I was never invited." □

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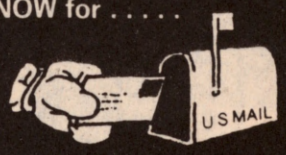

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MADISON Square Garden once used to be in the heart of "Tin Ear Alley," on New York City's west side, where it stood as a mecca for pugilists and ex-pugilists from all parts of the world. Every day you could see many boxing greats, such as Tommy Loughran, Mickey Walker, Jack Dempsey, Johnny Dundee and hosts of others, heading for Stillman's Gymnasium to watch champions and potential champions preparing for their coming bouts. One of those who used to stroll down Eighth Avenue was a soft-spoken dandy sporting a bright red tie, French beret and walking stick—a custom he acquired when he took refuge in Paris, following several rushes with the law—with a golden smile. Accentuated by flashing gold filings. This was the indomitable Jack Johnson, known as "Li'l Arthur," the former heavyweight champion of the world. ***BY JOHN REALDINE***

Left: The Galveston Giant storyteller finds a receptive ear in the person of Dave Barry, boxing's famed "Third Man" in the "Long Count" encounter. Above: Johnson tries his hand at a new line, that of a bandmaster, leading up to his final jab: that of a fleecer of fact at a flea circus.

[JACK JOHNSON'S DECLINING YEARS AS . . .]

BOXING'S MASTER STORYTELLER

Jack Johnson was probably the best heavyweight fighter of all time. He was a clever, scientific boxer and could hit with either hand. Although a heavyweight, he moved around the ring, gracefully, jabbing, side stepping, driving left and right blows to his opponent, with the ease of a featherweight.

At the end of his spectacular career, Jack Johnson found himself penniless and practically friendless. He was reduced to earning his bread and butter as a curio piece at Hubert's Museum, Forty-second Street east of Eighth Avenue, New York City. Hubert's featured Professor Renato, the sword swallower, Madam Catalina, the snake charmer and the live Flea Circus, the only trained live fleas in the entire world. But the main attraction was Jack Johnson, whose life size photograph loomed at the entrance to attract the curious. The admission was only ten cents.

Inside you walked down a dingy, wooden stairs to the basement and joined a small group of onlookers, listening to the fables and fight talk flowing from the lips of the smiling Jack Johnson, then well into his 50s, spinning tales & remaking history in his own image as he told them, Hans Christian Andersen style.

Standing on a platform three feet high, Johnson would demonstrate to his audience all the tricks in the art and science of self defense. At the conclusion of his demonstration, he would ask softly, "Has any of you folks got a question you would like to ask me? I will be glad to answer them for you."

Questions shot at Johnson like machine gun bullets. All he could hear was "Stanley Ketchel," "Joe Grim," and "Jess Willard." Johnson, with a broad grin across his face, would exclaim, "One moment, folks, please, you ask me about my fights with Stanley Ketchel, Joe Grim and Jess Willard. Now, I'se gonna take these fights one at a time. First I'se gonna tell you about my fight with Stanley Ketchel."

When telling the story of Stanley Ketchel, he would blink his eyes like a fluttering butterfly, holding his chin as if in pain, he would say, "Oh Boy, that baby could surely hit. He hits me with a terrific hard right, smack on the button, and down I goes." Someone in the audience would yell, "Why didn't you block that one, Jack?" Johnson would answer, "You see, folks, my fight with Stanley Ketchel was supposed to be one of those fixed fights for the benefit of the gambling interest. It was agreed by all concerned that I was to let Mr. Ketchel go the entire route, but, Mr. Ketchel was a bad boy in the ring . . . You see, folks, in my days we had no boxing commissioners to reprimand a fighter for using dirty tactics and Mr. Ketchel sure took advantage of that situation. He broke every rule of sportsmanship conceivable. I carried Mr. Ketchel nicely. As we came out for the 12th round, I intentionally missed with a left hook, leaving myself open for a right cross. Ketchel could not resist the temptation and lets go with a terrific sucker punch that almost puts me out of business. Man, I was real mad. I knows I'se being doublecrossed. At the count of three, I gets up from the floor and I lets go a left and right combination to the jaw, knocking Mr. Ketchel out cold. When I gets back to my corner, I discover two teeth were embedded in my right hand glove. Yes, folks, Mr. Ketchel was a bad boy in the ring and doubly bad out of the ring. His career ended when he was shot and killed over the affection of a farmer's wife."

"Now, I'se gonna tell you about my fight with Joe Grim. I fought Joe Grim down in Philadelphia in 1905. They called him the man with the iron jaw. I didn't know exactly what his jaw was made of but it sure felt as if it were made of concrete and steel. In the first round, I hits Joe Grim with everything but the water bucket. In the following rounds, I cut Grim up into ribbons, his face was a bloody mess. I floored him with solid rights to the chin, again and again, but he always came back, fighting gamely. The whole affair was so sickening, I motioned the referee to stop the fight. The referee says, "Oh, no, Jack, the mob is betting that you can't KO Grim tonight—and I want to stay alive.'

"In all, I floored Joe fifteen times. As we came out for the sixth and final round, I was in such agony and pain that I could punch no more. After the fight, I goes to the hospital and the X-rays shows that I had two broken bones in my left hand and three broken knuckles in my right hand. Yes, folks, Joe Grim sure had an iron jaw."

At the conclusion of his Joe Grim story, Johnson would pour himself a glass of water and relax for a few moments. Then someone would interrupt his short intermission by yelling, "How did you feel when Jess Willard clipped you on the chin, Jack?

Although Johnson had answered this disputed question thousands of times, he gave the impression of being shocked and surprised. The smile disappears from his face, for the first time his eyes showed violence. Showing a photograph of himself on his back in his fight with Jess Willard, he would exclaim, "Folks, now look at this picture. You will notice that while the referee was counting, I was trying to keep the sun out of my eyes. I could've gotten up all right but this fight was faked and I was paid to take a dive. The day before the fight there was a meeting at a hotel by so-called society gamblers and gun-slinging hoodlums from all parts of the world. They had pooled together thirty thousand dollars as a price for me to take a dive. I was broke and, brother, when I sees all them shining gold pieces, I says, 'Yes, sir, the deal is on! When does I get the gold?'

"You see, Folks, the promise was there, the gold was there, but there was a catch to it. They tells me everything was OK and that I would get paid after the fight. At this point, I gets kind of suspicious and I says, 'Oh, no, that'll never do. I'se the star in this show and I wants it my way. That is, that the money is to be paid to my wife who will be sitting in the audience and when she stands up, signifying that she received the money in full, I will take the dive and there's no other way; otherwise, what I mean to say, is that when my wife gets up, I goes down. I hope that's clear.' They all agreed to my plan. We all shook hands and the deal was on.

"The day of the fight, I was frustrated and full of anxiety. Round after round, I toyed with the two hundred and fifty pound Jess Willard, my eyes was fixed on my wife who seemed frozen to her seat. I hears voices saying, "Lay down, nigger, or we'll fill you full of lead.' " But I wouldn't budge.

"We were now coming up to the 26th round. It was now or never for the fight to come to an end because I was getting tired and the thought of being double-crossed made me real mad. As I bounced out of my corner at the gong of the 26th round, to make the kill, I saw my wife standing up, with a thirty thousand dollar smile on her face. I said to myself, 'Jack, hold everything and I lose my crown by a dive.' "

Johnson would then reach for his blue beret and walking stick and in a polite, soft manner would say, "Folks, I hope you enjoyed my little talk. I hope to see you all again some time as I'se going out to get some coffee." Placing his blue beret on his shiny, bald head, he walked out, underneath his oversized photo, for a stroll along "Tin Ear Alley." □

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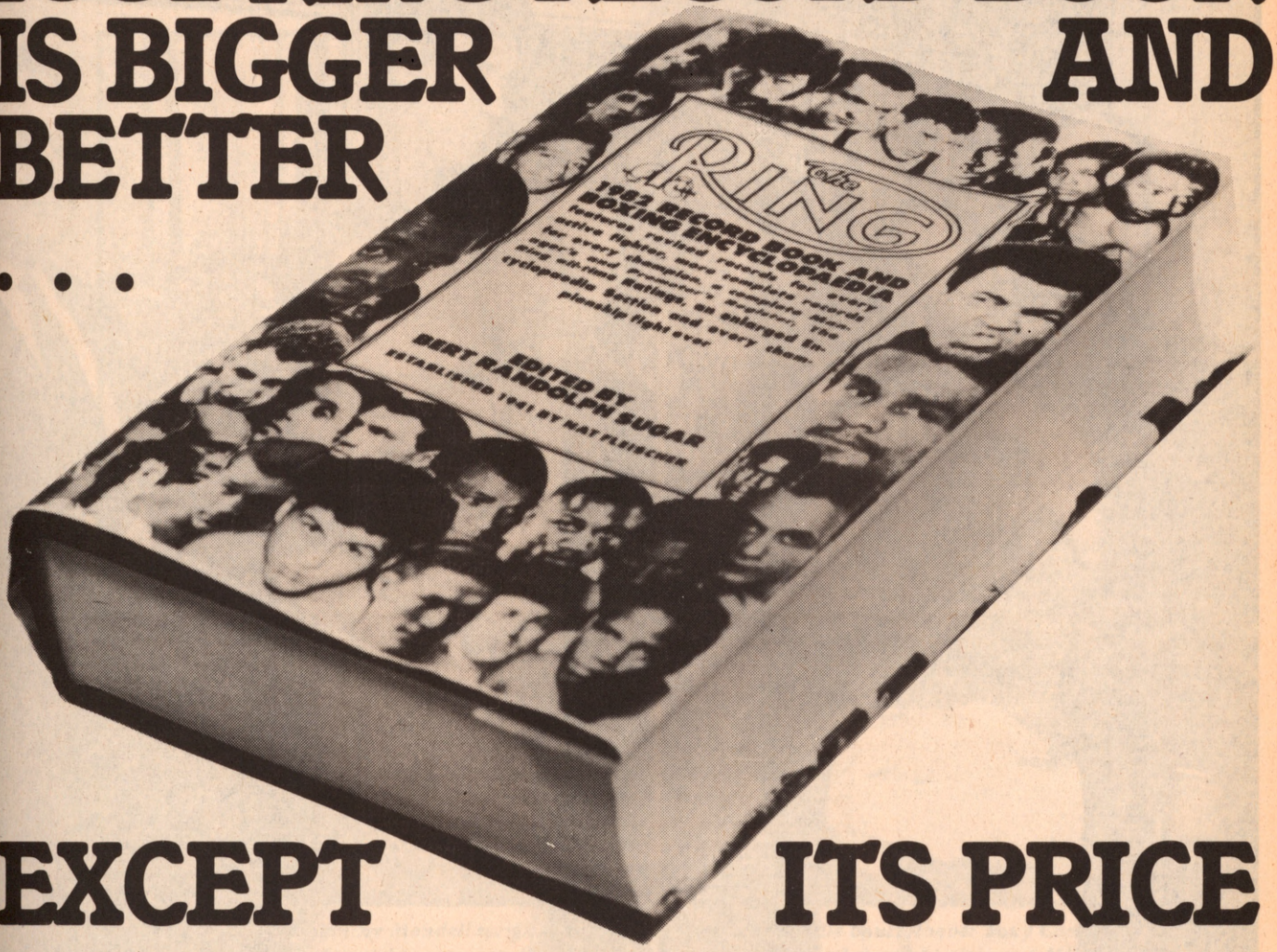

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IT'S NOT easy to imagine whether Tony Canzoneri would have become a mass media sports celebrity if he'd been born in, say, 1958, instead of 50 years before. He was from Louisiana, and he spoke in a slow, drawling, innocent ramble. But his words could often sound belligerent, like a southern version of John Verderosa.

BY HERBERT G. GOLDMAN

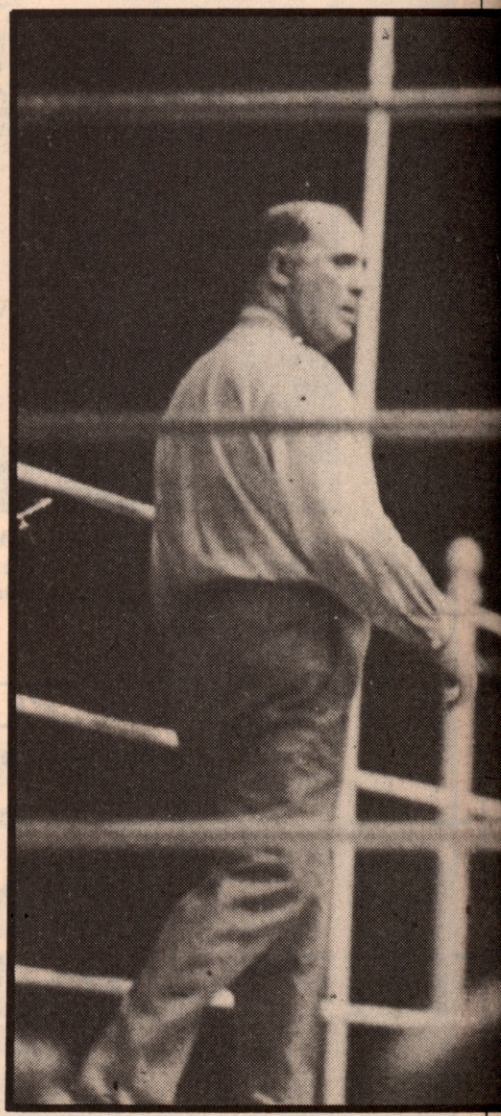
Left: Canzoneri and Sammy Mandell weigh in before their lightweight title bout. Above: Tony Canzoneri signs to defend his lightweight crown against Lou Ambers as current featherweight claimant Mike Belloise signs for the same card under the watchful eye of Garden matchmaker Jimmy Johnston.

[POUND-FOR-POUND AND PUNCH-FOR-PUNCH . . .]

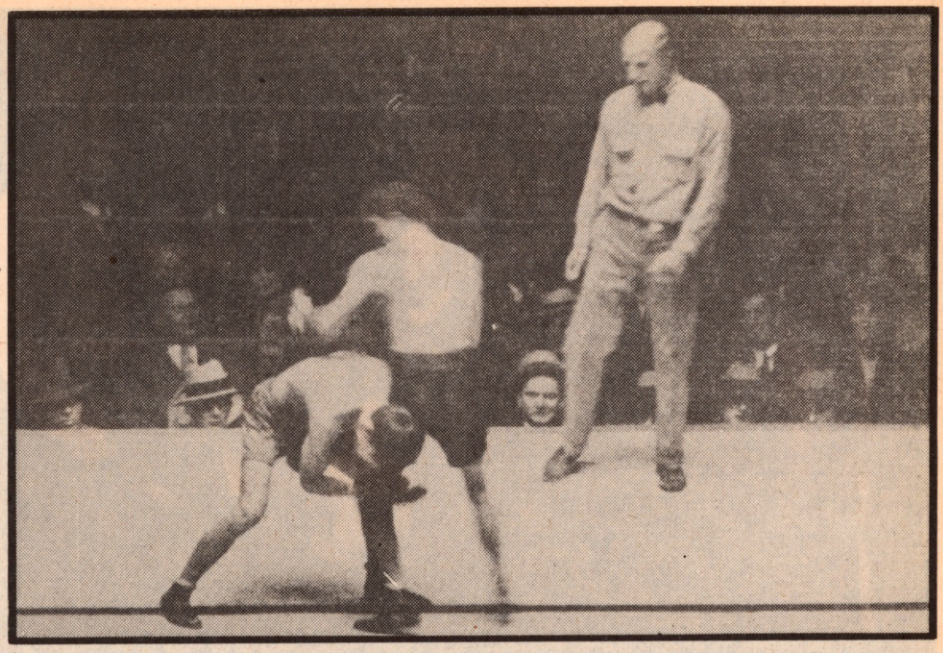
TONY CANZONERI: THE NOBLEST ROMAN WARRIOR OF THEM ALL

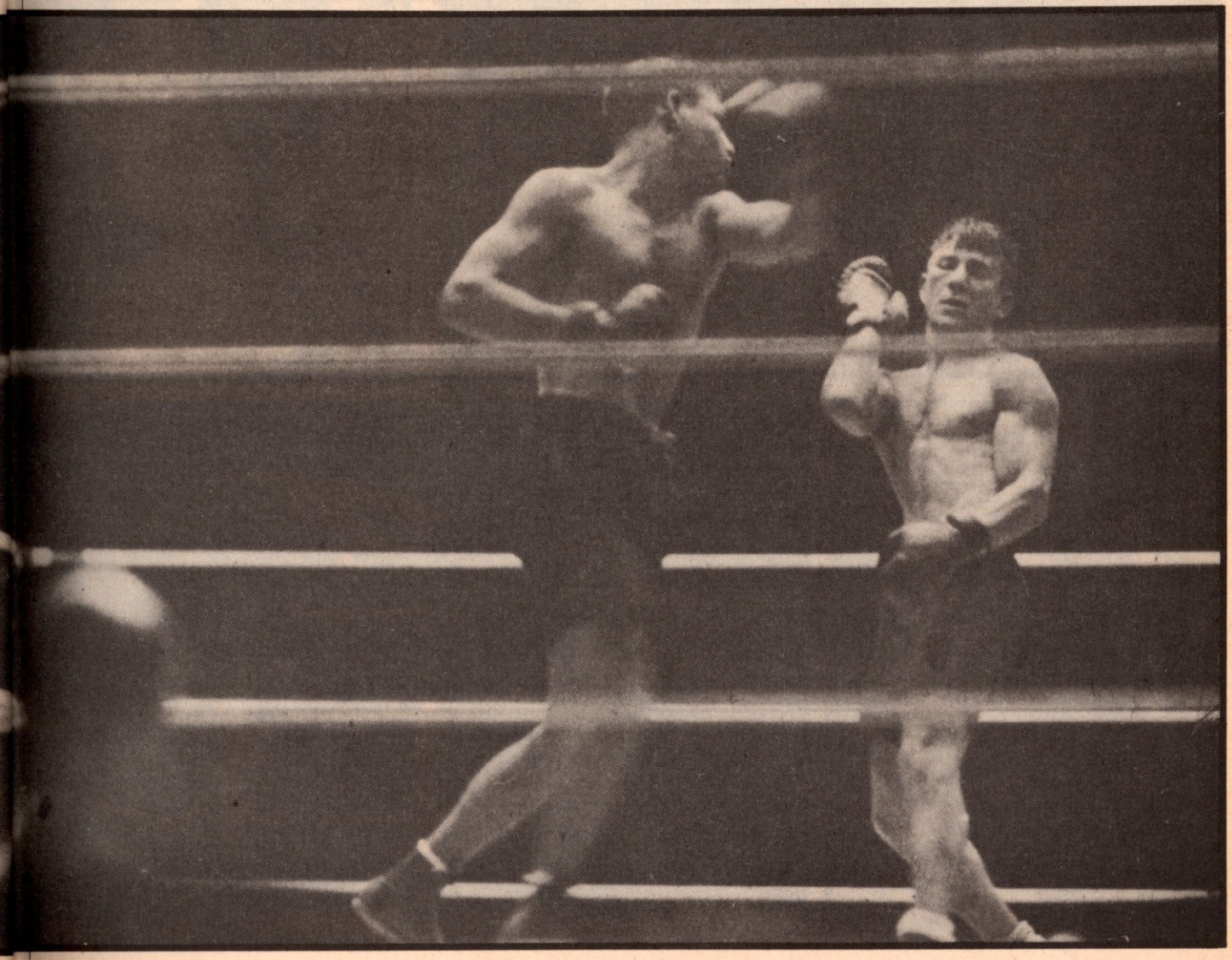
"I ALWAYS HAD A DESIRE TO MEET (Jimmy) McLarin since the day I saw him flatten Sid Terris in a round at the Garden. I weighed 126 pounds at the time and Jimmy was a great lightweight but I begged Sammy (Goldman, his manager) to get the match. I knew it would be a dangerous fight but that is why I like the game. Because of the element of danger in every fight. If everything was a sure thing in this racket, you can rest assured that I wouldn't be in it long. I sure would like to cross gloves with Jimmy before I get out of boxing. Not that I have anything personally against Jimmy—I think he is a swell kid—but just because of the danger attached to it. If Jimmy whipped me I would be the first to congratulate him."

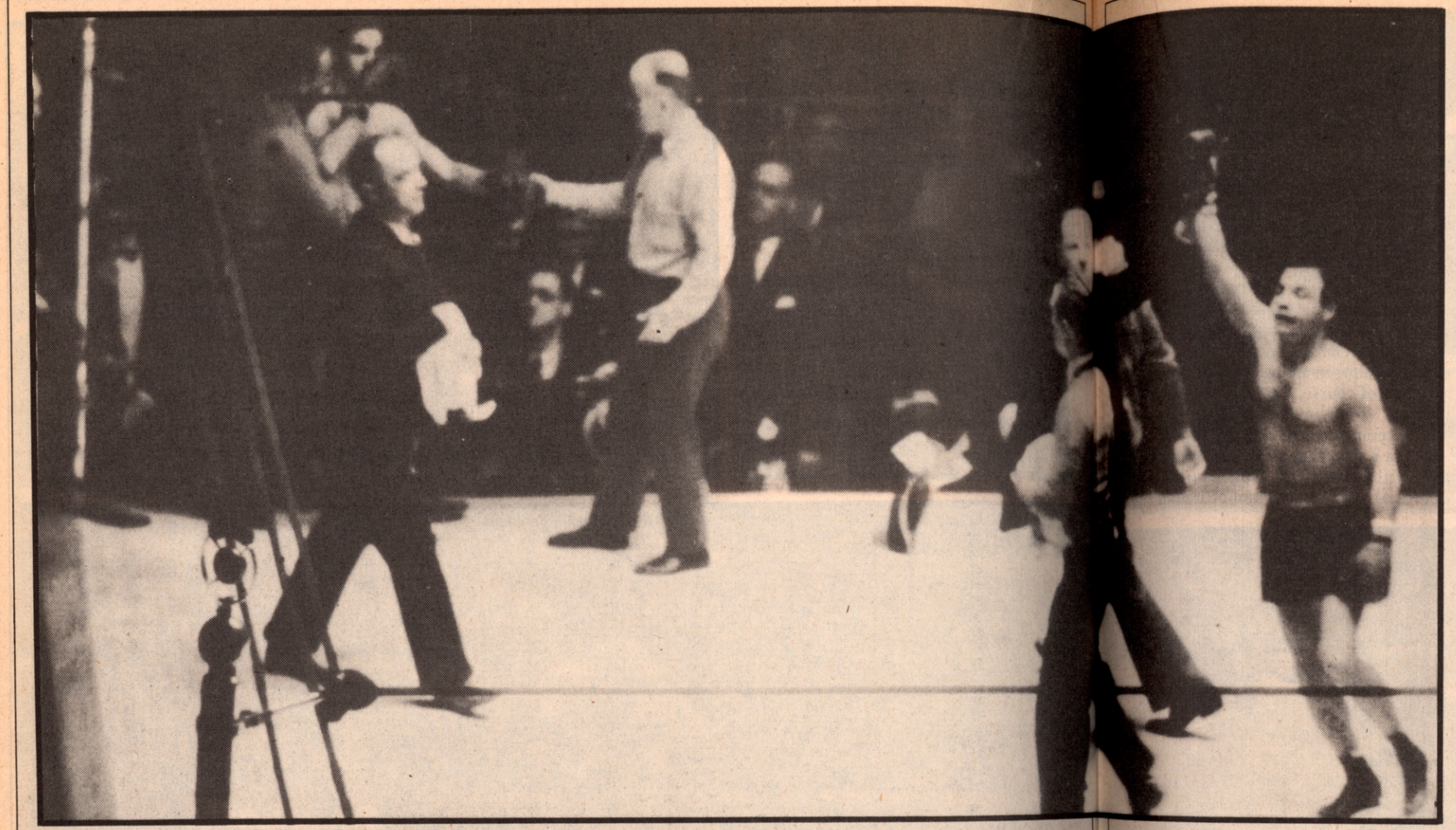
Tony was a perpetualy naive kid who always seemed a little out of place when he wasn't fighting. He was no Sugar Ray Leonard, but he was a fighter that the dyed-in-the-wool boxing aficionados real-

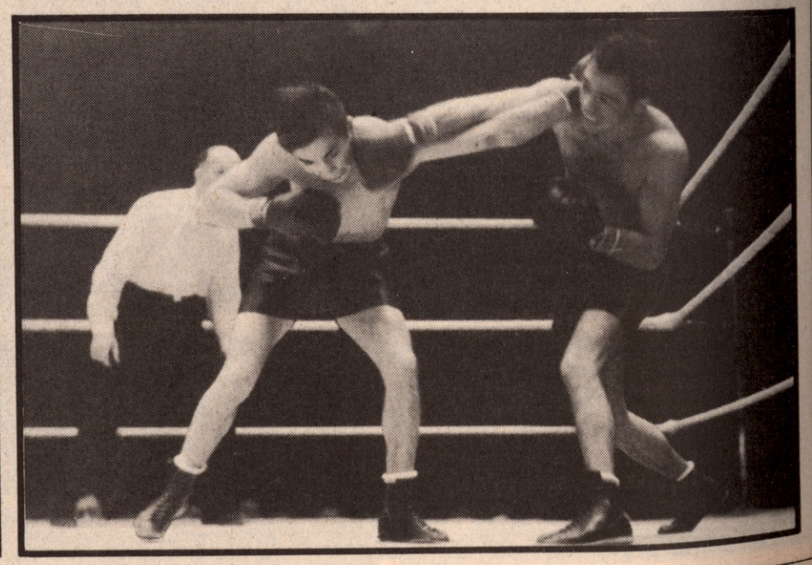


August 2, 1929—Sammy Mandell uses the heel of his left hand to beat Canzoneri and retain his crown (above). Johnny Dundee and Canzoneri engage in a little extra-curricular gym activity (near right), December 14, 1928. Al Singer, in his big-time debut, holds Canzoneri to a draw (right hand page, top two). February 10, 1928—"Canzi" wins the featherweight title from Benny Bass (bottom right).









old Steeplechase A.A. in Rockaway Beach on June 17, 1925, knocking out Jack Gardner in 1:34 of the first round for a $40 purse. He stayed undefeated in his next 30 contests, including three draws, before losing on points to the respected Davey Abad in his first 10-rounder. Tony, at the time, was 18, although Goldman said that he was three years older, the New York State Commission having ruled that no fighter less than 21 could box more than six innings.

Tony was a marvelous boxer-puncher with the quickness of a cat who could pinpoint a straight right with unbelievable precision. He carried his left low, but was

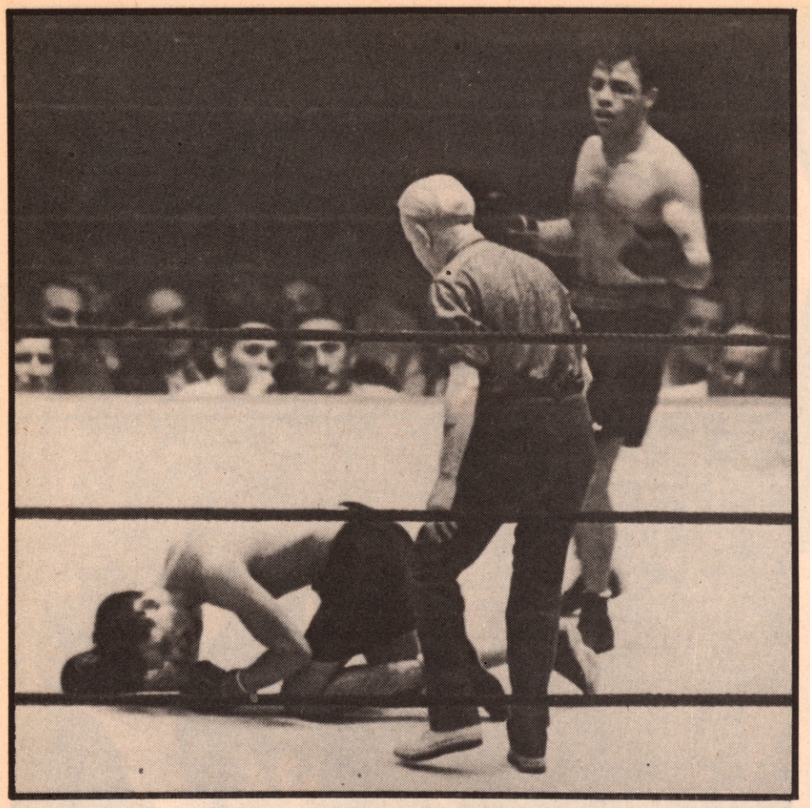
November 14, 1930—Canzoneri wins the lightweight crown with a 66-second KO of Al Singer (top left); Canzoneri and Singer square off before the title changed hands (bottom far left); June 23, 1933—Barney Ross beats Canzoneri to win* both *lightweight* and *junior welterweight crowns (bottom left); Tony becomes player after Singer (bottom right).

ly loved. A fight fan's fighter; that was Canzoneri.

Canzi was born on November 6, 1908 in Slidell, Louisiana, a lumber camp outside of New Orleans. From the time he was a small boy, he just loved to fight. He was only eleven when he first showed up at Gayosa's Gym in New Orleans, the training quarters for Pete Herman, Basil Galiano, and other Crescent City stars of that era. Herman, whose real surname was Gulotta, took a liking to the kid, and, after teaching him to box, wrote his friend, Sammy Goldman, advising him to take the boy in tow.

Tony was only about 14 when he started fighting as an amateur for Goldman. He weighed 95 pounds then, and fought in the junior flyweight class. But, in 1923, the Canzoneris moved to Brooklyn, and Tony won the New York State AAU bantamweight title in 1924.

Canzoneri had his first pro fight at the



September 10, 1931—Canzoneri floors Jackie (Kid) Berg as he successfully defends his lightweight title (above); Canzoneri signs to defend his title against Kid Chocolate, defeating him in 15, October 20, 1931 (right); Canzoneri knocks down challenger Cecil Payne on the way to a 10-round victory in their junior welterweight title bout, July 13, 1931 (top right); Berg shows the effect of a Canzoneri right (bottom right), April 24, 1931.

on the line, Canzoneri boxed, and was an easy winner.

That was in 1932. In 1927, however, Canzoneri was a bantam facing Charles Bud Taylor over 10 rounds in Chicago for the vacant NBA title and a $4,000 diamond studded belt. The guy who got the belt that night was the promoter, Jimmy Mullen, as the contest ended in a draw.

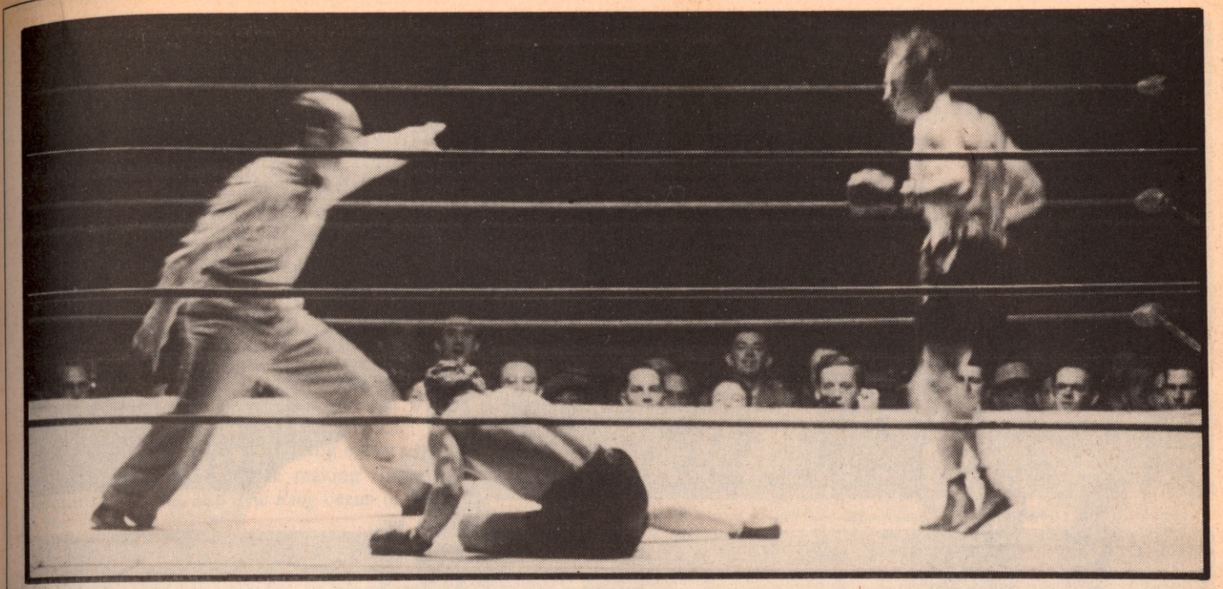
There was, of course, a return battle, one which Tony lost on a decision "which in many quarters was considered a gift," according to Duke Barry of *The Ring*. The fight was very fast, both boxers tossing wicked leather from the sound of the first gong. A third match, held in Madison Square Garden later on that year, saw Tony a points in an over-the-weight bout.

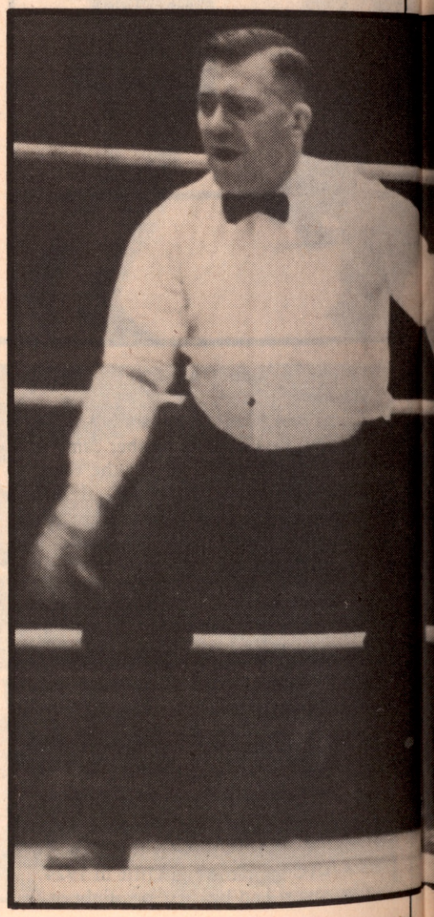
That, of course, was after the bout that "made" Tony—a 15-round decision over the veteran Johnny Dundee in the Garden. In a way, that contest was a "changing of the guard," as Dundee (real name Corrara) had been the idol of Italian fight

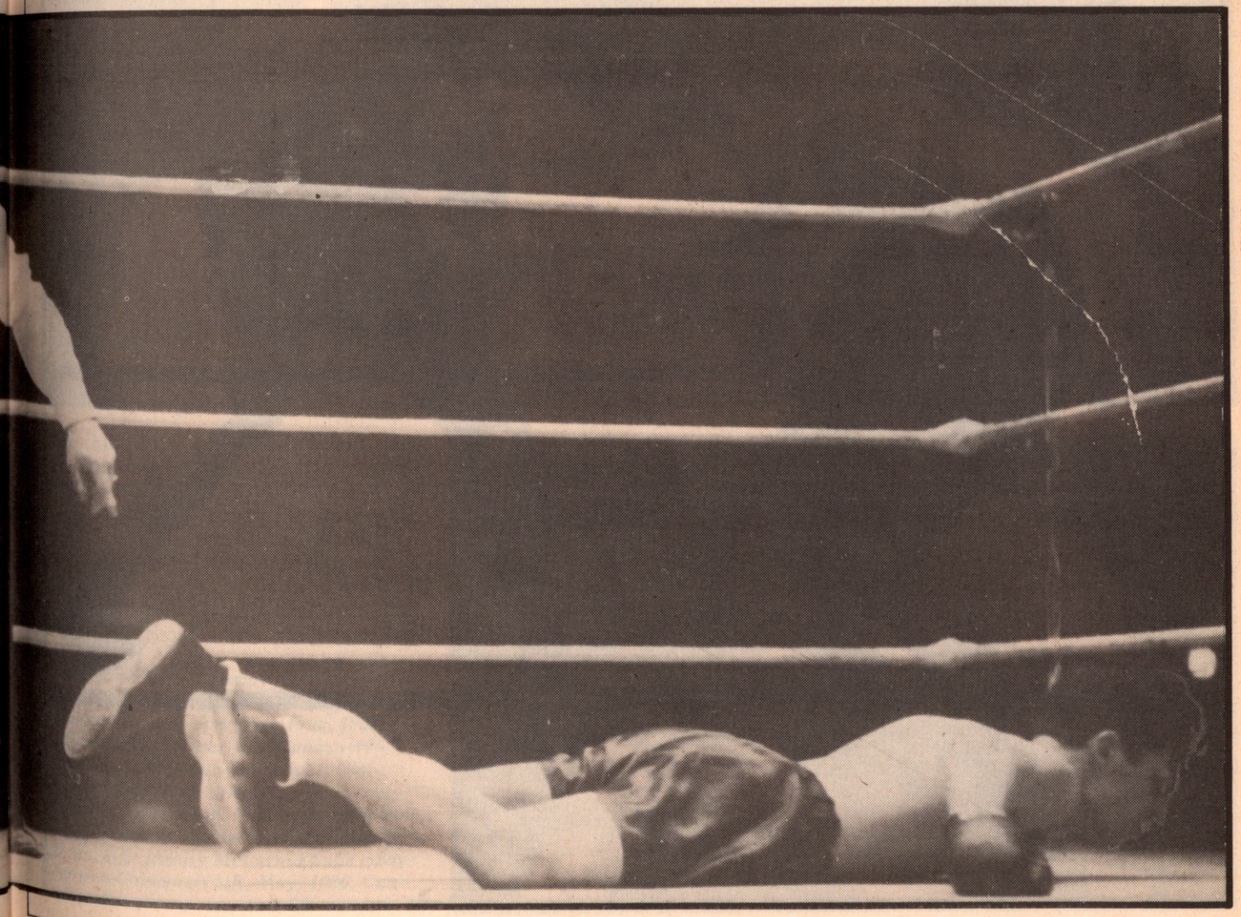
never easy to hit. On top of that, he had an iron chin.

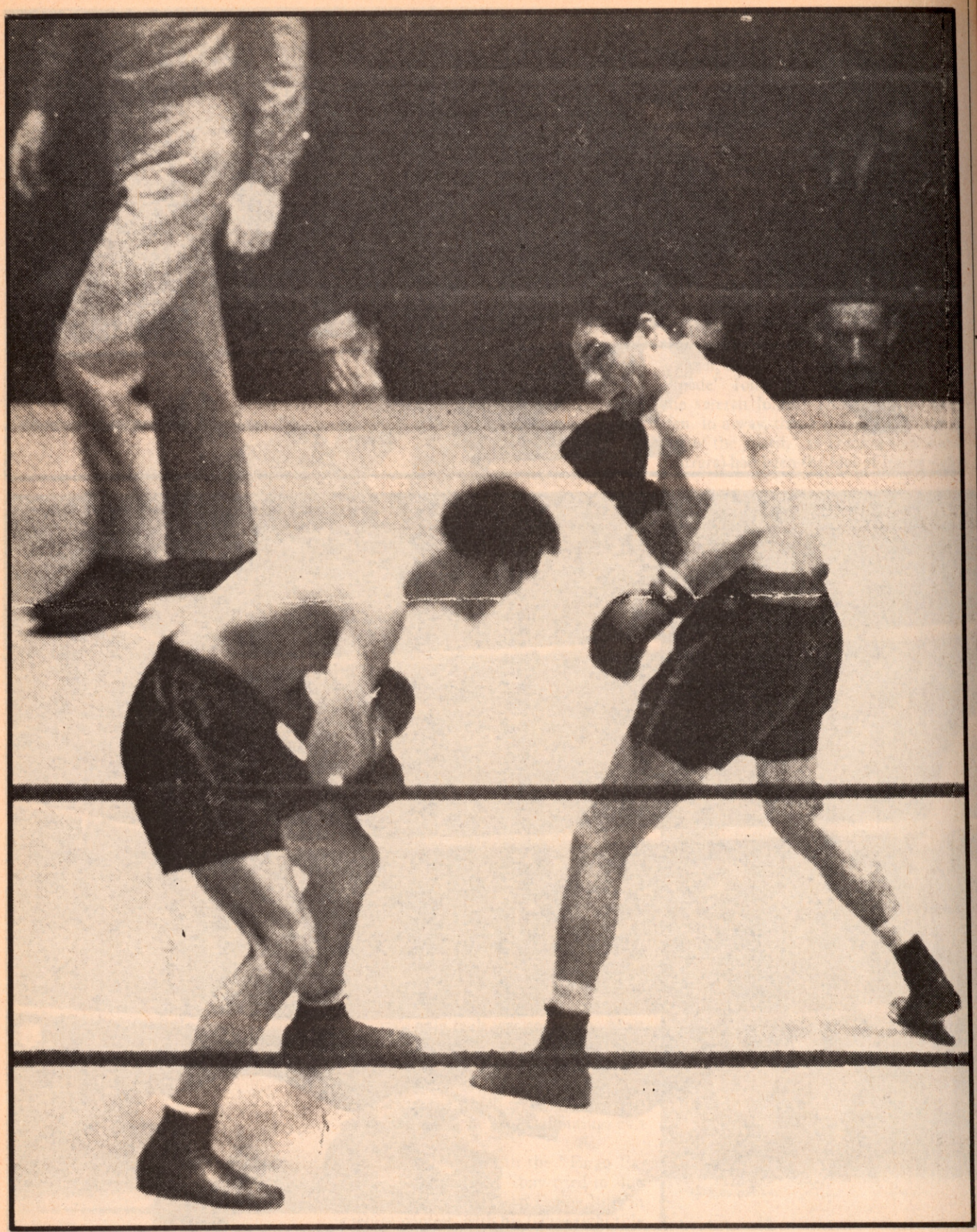
Canzi's only fault was cockiness. Most boxer-punchers box the punchers that they meet and try to slug the boxers. Not Tony. He tried to outbox all the boxers and outslug the which is why he was outpointed 22 times in 176 total outings as a pro.

In his first fight with the "Fargo Express," Billy Petrolle, Tony tried to slug and found himself a loser. Facing Billy in a return contest, with his lightweight title









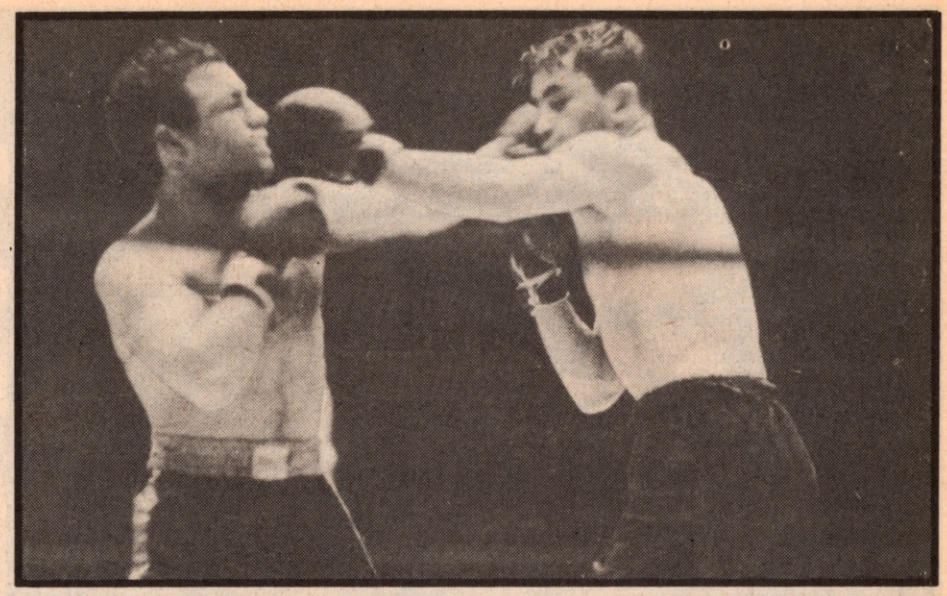
fans for a generation. The king was dead, but hail the new king!

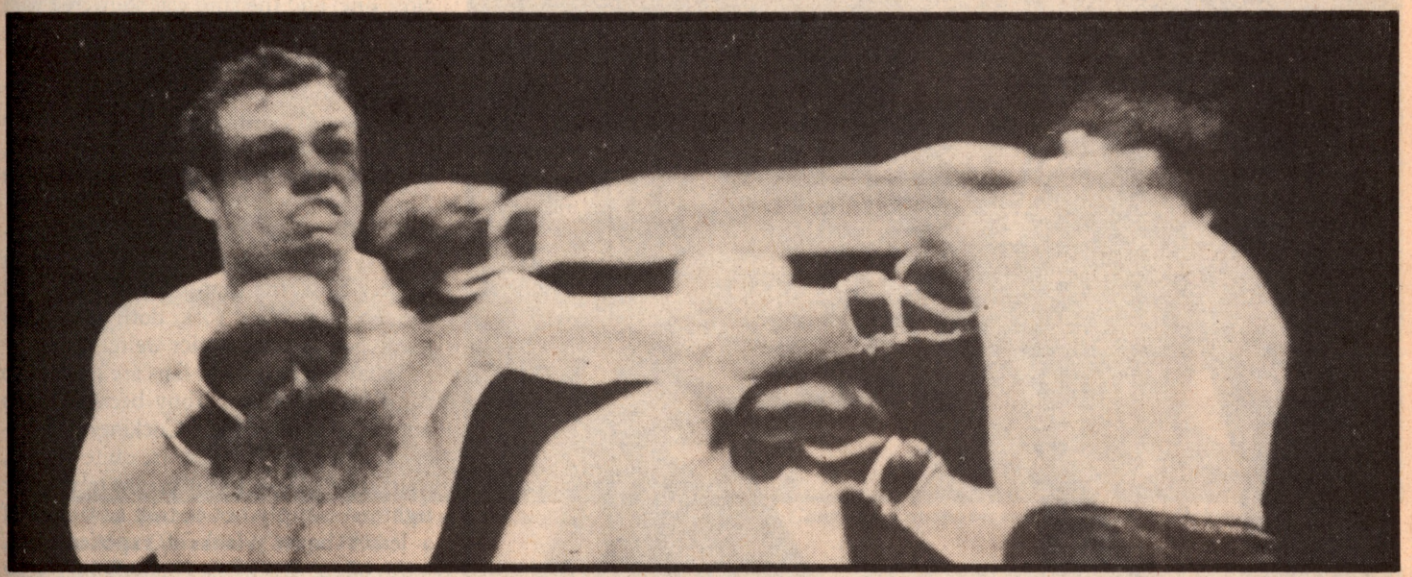
In boxing, though, a "king" means, usually, a champion, and Canzi won his first world crown a few months later, when he outscored Benny Bass for the world featherweight title. "Although walloped to a queen's taste," said *The Ring*, "Bass staged a wonderful rally in the last five stanzas." Two weeks later, Canzoneri went under the knife. (It was nothing Bass did; Tony just had his tonsils taken out.)

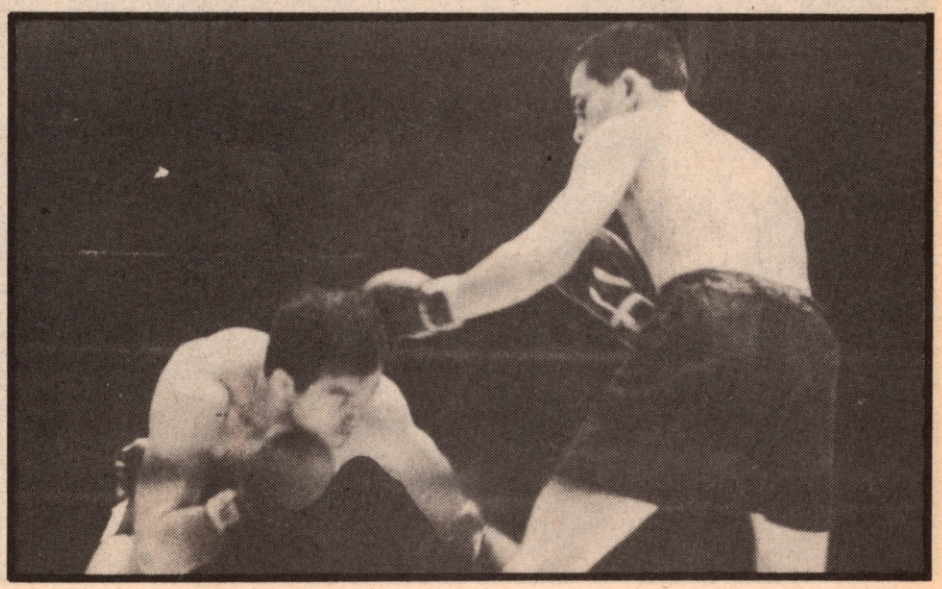
Tony didn't remain world featherweight champion long. France's Andre Routis, whom he had beaten two years earlier, outstaminad him in an upset at the Garden on September 28, 1928. Once again, it was a case of Canzi being cocky.

Tony had a little trouble making the weight for Routis, and *The Ring* began to rate him as a junior lightweight. But Goldman wasn't interested in any junior titles, and August 2, 1929 saw Tony tackle champion Sammy Mandell for the lightweight crown in Chicago Stadium.

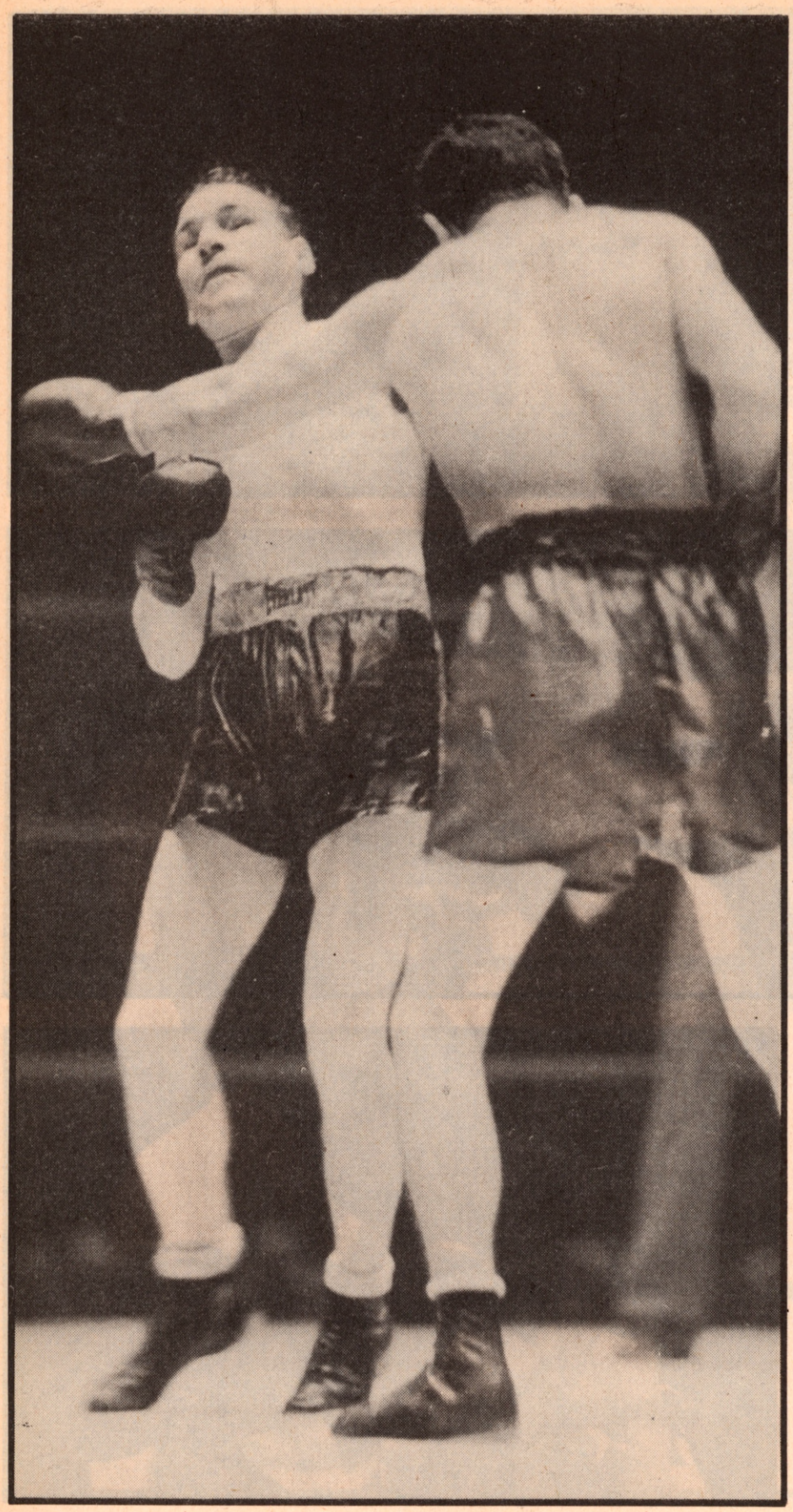
Canzi climbed into the ring with a patch over his right eyebrow to protect a cut he'd received in a bout with Phil McGraw about three weeks before.







Left: Petrolle bobs away from a Canzoneri left. Top: Canzoneri (left) and Barney Ross swap jabs in June, 1933. Middle: Ross (right) and Canzoneri trade lefts in round one. Right: Canzoneri slips a left thrown by Ross early in their September, 1933 bout. Boss won the 15-rounder by decision. Following page, left: Jimmy McLarnin pulls away from a Canzoneri left, May, 1936. Canzoneri won on points over 10 rounds.



(Imagine that today.) Mandell fought the fight of his career that night, and won a split decision, with referee Dave Barry (of "long count" fame) carding it for Tony.

You can't keep a good man down, of course—though in boxing it's the policy to try it—and Canzoneri got a shot at Mandell's one-round conqueror, Al Singer. Boxing history was made, as Singer became the first and, thus far, only champ, to win and lose his title by first round kayoes. Tony finished Al in 1:06.

Tony's first defense saw him kayo England's Jack (Kid) Berg in the third round in Chicago Stadium. With that win, Tony also picked up Jackie's junior welter crown, a title he held till Johnny Jadick took a close decision from him in the Philadelphia Arena on January 18, 1932. A rematch, held in Philly's Baker Bowl six months later, saw Jadick win another close one, and the ring was showered with cushions, papers, and everything but the men's room sink by irate fans.

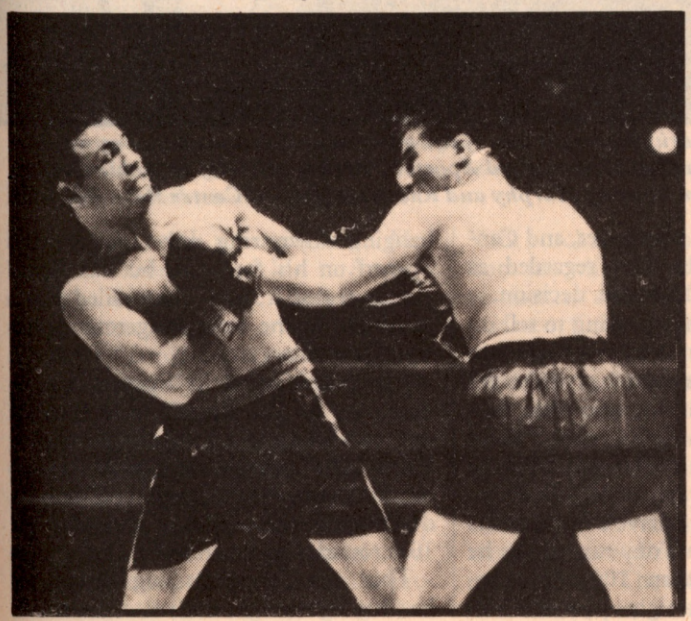
Tony subsequently regained his junior welter laurels with a unanimous decision over Battling Shaw, Jadick's conqueror, at Heinemann Park in New Orleans on May 21, 1933.

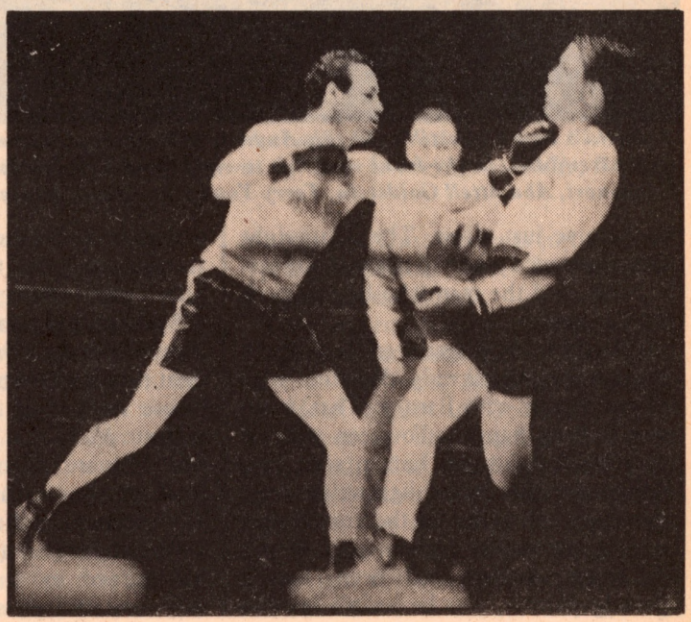
Canzi's next two fights were classics—razor thin decision losses to young Barney Ross, the first one in Chicago and the second in New York. Both these fights involved light and junior welter crowns.

Today's young fight fans are inclined to think too lightly of Tony because of his not infrequent defeats. Cockiness was only one reason. The fact is, quite frankly, that Tony gave a lot of breaks to younger fighters—simply not to take advantage of a lesser boxer's lack of experience, or, quite often, skill. One young fighter Tony carried opened a deep gash over his eye. With defeat by TKO staring him in the face, Tony plowed into the kid and knocked him out in the next session. But only because he had to.

Canzi, what is more, ducked no one, and the names of the men he fought look like a register of great bantams, featherweights, lights, and welters (Tony got around and often gave away much weight) of the late twenties and thirties—Bushy Graham, Andre Routis, Bud Taylor, Vic Burrone, Benny Bass, Al Singer, Ignacio Fernandez, Sammy Mandell, Stanislaus Loayza, Jack (Kid) Berg, Joe Glick, Billy Petrolle, Al Singer, Sammy Fuller, Cecil Payne, Johnny Jadick, Harry Dublisnky, Wesley Ramey, Frankie Klick, Baby Arizmendi, Lou Ambers, Bobby Pacho, Al Roth, Jimmy McLarnin, Lou Ambers, Al Dunbar, Eddie Ziv-

Above: Lou Ambers tries to fend off Canzoneri in May, 1935. Below left: Canzoneri outpoints Al Roth, 1935. Below right: Ambers loses in 15 to Canzoneri, May, 1935.





A World's Fair Collectible: In this August, 1939 photo, Canzoneri poses with one of the greatest collections of boxing notables ever assembled. In the front row, left to right, are: Red Burman, Al Singer, Fred Apostoli, Packey O'Gatty, Frankie Genaro, Canzoneri, Abe Attell Goldstein, Terry Young (kneeling), Harlem Tommy Murphy and Knockout Brown. Center Row: Ben Jeby,

ic, to name just a few. The lightweight class was loaded with top talent in the early 1930s, and the man who led the pack was Canzoneri.

It would be no disgrace to Tony if his career had gone directly downhill after his two flights with Barney. That, however, did not happen. Fourteen wins in his next 16 fights put him in with Lou Ambers for the vacant lightweight title after Ross had given up the crown after winning the welter diadem from Jimmy McLarnin. Ambers had been Tony's sparring partner, but he hadn't learned enough to defeat the master yet, and Canzi regained what the fans regarded as "his" title with a 15-round decision.

Age, however, was beginning to tell on Tony Canzoneri. But there was one more fight he wanted—one more big win to get before he packed it in, and that was against McLarnin. Tony and "Baby Face" square off in a 10-round affair in Madison Square Garden on May 8, 1936.

No sooner had the referee's instructions been completed than Tony turned—as he had turned more than 100 times before—and walked straight into the still hanging down ring mike. A gash was opened on his forehead, but his frantic corner sealed it, and Tony sailed out to meet one of the most dangerous welterweights in history.

Jimmy was going for that cut, but, in doing so, he left himself wide open for one of Canzi's patented straight rights. Boom! The blow did not kayo McLarnin, but it stunned him, and there was no doubt about the winner at the end of the 10th round. Canzoneri easily.

That was Tony's last big victory. He lost his lightweight crown to Ambers in

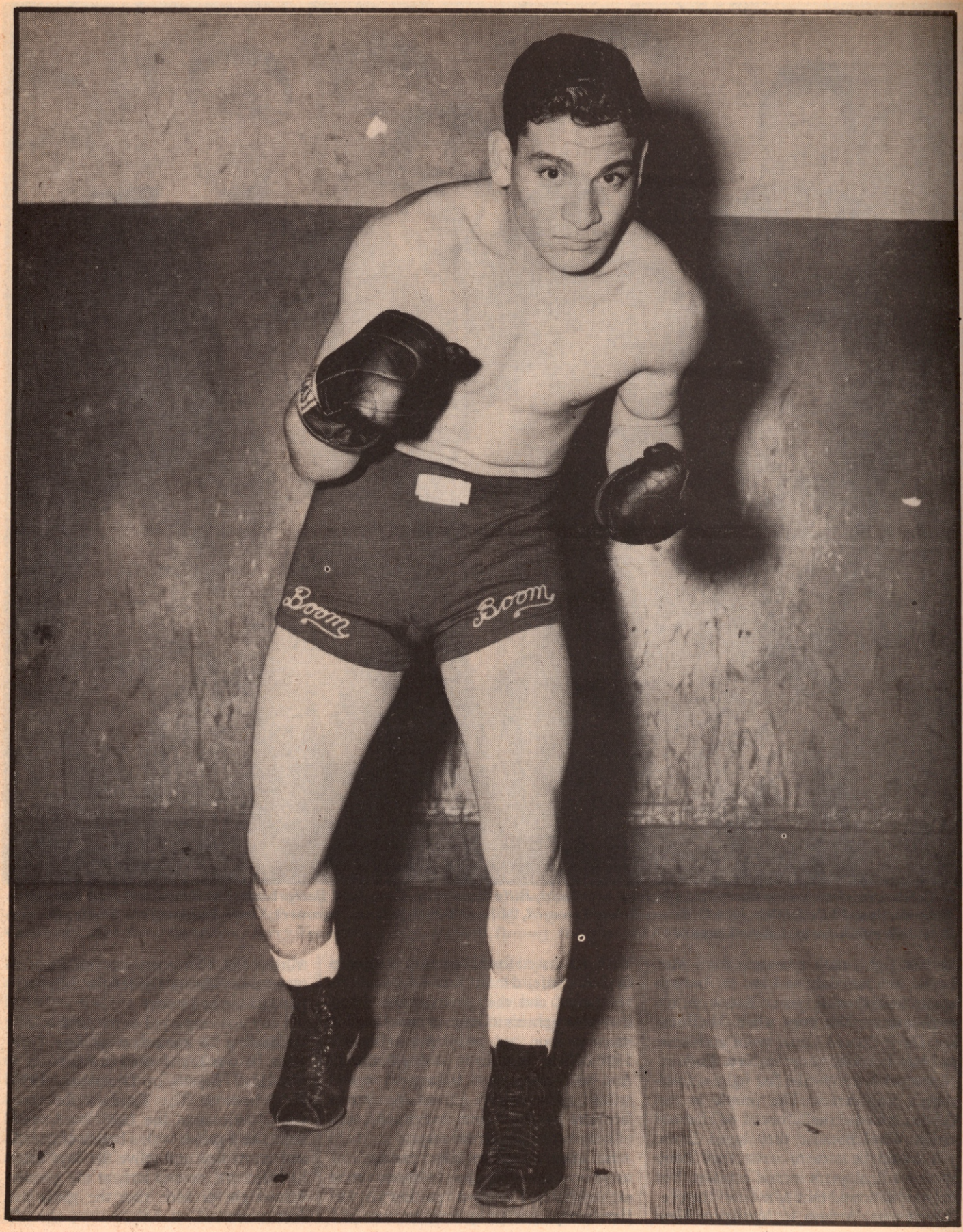
Solly Seamon, Announcer Harry Balogh, Joey Archibald, Billy Conn. Top Row: Paul Berlenbach, Jim Braddock, Jack Dempsey, Melio Bettina, Philadelphia Jack O'Brien, Benny Leonard, Mike O'Dowd, Johnny Summers, Gene Tunney, Jack Skelly, Barney Ross, Vince Dundee and Mike Leonard.

his next fight, took a beating from McLarnin in a rematch, and lost to Ambers again the following year. But it didn't really matter. Not even when Al (Bummy) Davis floored Canzi twice and stopped him in round three in New York on November 1, 1939—the last fight of Canzoner's long career. The people in the Garden crowd actually booed on that occasion. Why? Because they loved Canzi.

It would be nice to write that Tony spent his final years in real comfort, but his story followed that of most of the pre-TV champs. A farm in Marlboro, New York purchased for his parents, a divorce from his wife, dancer Rita Ray, sour investments, and the general high living that most fighters indulge in once they hit the top soon ate away the estimated $300,000 he had made as a pro boxer. And his cockiness and willingness to carry his opponents gave him an even worse fate than poverty. Canzi, sad to state, was punchy when he quit the ring.

He once served as the "partner" of stand-up comedian Joey Adams in a nightclub act. The word "partner" is, unfortunately, put in quotes, because the truth is that Canzoneri was just a stereotyped punchdrunk fighter for Adams to slap and use as a stooge.

Tony was employed as the host at The Paddock, a bar restaurant in New York, when he was found dead in his room at the Hotel Bryant in December, 1959. He'd been at The Paddock for three years, and, after the bar closed, each night, he'd gather with a bunch of friends and sports fans and relive the days when he ruled the roost as king of the greatest lightweight division that the game has ever known. □


Boom
Boom

"HE NEVER STOPS BOOMING," SAID MAX JOSS, Broadway arena matchmaker in 1938 when he got his first look at a new lightweight from Youngstown, Ohio. That's how the billing of Lenny (Boom Boom) Mancini came about.

Forever after it was his badge—this squat aggressive slugger had a notable career before World War II. He came back to a less successful one following service in the European theater. It's more than coincidental that he'd been hit by six pieces of shrapnel at Metz.

But you remember those doll-gags of a few years ago? You wind them up and do so-and-so. With Boom Boom, you wound him up and he couldn't stop punching.

At the Broadway he topped shows almost as often as Bernie Friedkin. But his fights are better remembered, Frank (Jay) Jacobs says so. Jay should know. He managed them both.

In Mancini's first fight here he beat Charley Varre—at a price. He broke his jaw. When they said good-bye to him, they meant it. Yet six months later he borrowed the fare to come back from Youngstown. And soon he was boom-booming along.

His enactment of the irresistible force was best demonstrated against Jack Hurley's sharpshooting Billy Marquart. Down in the first round, he got up to win, flooring Marquart in a late round. Three weeks later they went at it again, this time in Cleveland. Nothing changed, he was down, he dropped Marquart, he won.

In Cleveland the next month he met NBA lightweight champion Sammy Angott over the weight. In the ninth round he had Angott hanging on after three big rights. He got the referee's vote 7-2-1. But both judges—'guest judges,' at that—went for Angott.

With many Boom Boom was No. 1 contender, with others it was Dave Castilloux. Two months before his induction in January, 1942, they met in Montreal and all three of the judges in Dave's home town gave it to Boom Boom. Referees don't vote there, even if Benny Leonard was the ref that night.

When Mancini came out of service he weighed 190. "If you want, make a try at it," advised Sammy Richman, Broadway promoter. He spent five months getting into shape. He won on half a dozen fights but he lost two to Rocky Castellani and quit.

His pro record was 55 wins, 12 defeats, two draws, no KOs against him.

Boom Boom, who was 48 on July 12, says: "I was so small a kid when I started boxing in Youngstown that my mother would hand-make my trunks, I couldn't get a pair of ready-mades. I went into the Golden Gloves as a flyweight and to make the minimum weight I had to eat a whole hand of bananas."

The Ring Record Book omits his first 10 pro fights, he notes. "They only start my record after Ray Arcel saw me in Youngstown and encouraged me to come to New York."

He recalls having 15 main events at the Broadway Arena, "but I was in St. Nick's Ridgewood Grove, the Garden and the ball parks."

He says: "When Marty Servo was only Lou Ambers' kid stablemate, we were in a six at the Garden. Neither of us slowed down and it was a draw. The night Joe Louis fought Lou Nova at the Polo Grounds I fought Terry Young in an eight. I beat him big and it was the second time we'd met. We drew at the Broadway."

He'd been thrilled in Montreal, when Benny Leonard

THE START OF A CHAMPIONSHIP LINE

BOOM BOOM I: LENNY MANCINI

By LESTER BROMBERG

told him "you're the nearest thing to Rocky Kansas." He had lost a title shot in the close loss to Sammy Angott but he says: Today we are good friends."

A month after his last fight, in 1947, he was married in Baltimore to Ellen Attreed, a New Jersey-born New Yorker whose folks still live in the metropolitan area. They came to Youngstown where he worked in construction until he joined General Fireproofing, a job he held 'til he retired.

He has three children, Ellen Dorita, almost 19, a working girl ambitious to teach who already has 30 hours of college studying nights; Leonard John, 11, who loves all sports and is studying the electric guitar, and Raymond Michael, 6, who is lefthanded and possibly dad's eventual successor as a fighter.

"I'm a little overweight," Boom Boom says, "and what hair I've got is graying. Another thing the book is wrong on—they say I'm only 5-2, I'm really 5-3." □

AS LENNY "BOOM BOOM" Mancini lay helpless on the cold, dank ground near Metz, severely wounded from six enemy machine-gun bursts, his one thought, despite the thunder of shells and the immediate danger to what little life he still possessed, was centered upon the fact that he might never be able to fight again.

While he waited for the medics, through his feeble consciousness there flashed back scenes in his fight with Sammy Angott, when he chased the lightweight champion all over the ring in Cleveland, only to see Sammy the Clutch cop an unpopular decision. His mind wandered back to the time he came out or the Civilian Conservation Corps where he was a cook and had learned to box.

His milling, perpetual-motion mode of battling caught on big with New York fight followers and some sports scribes even dubbed him the "White Armstrong" because his style of slugging was so similar to that of the former triple champion.

Lenny whipped Billy Marquart, Irving Eldridge, Dave Castilloux, Chief Crazy Horse, and a host of other topnotchers. In each case he was the underdog. Only five feet two inches tall, he looked like easy pickings for a clever boxer with a good left jab, but he surprised them all, this kid with a heart so big, he'd have to walk through a door sideways in order to pass through it.

Well, it was great while it lasted, Lenny figured. He'd

met a lot of nice people, traveled a bit, and made some money.

Soon the doctors were examining him and they were wondering how long the sturdy Mancini would last, when by all signs he should have been dead long ago. Boom Boom not only lasted, but as most fans already know, he's back on the boxing beat, winning bouts with his usual regularity, and has trained his sights on a match with Rocky Graziano whom he feels he can outslug anytime.

Wounded on November 10, 1944, while serving with the 35th Infantry Division, President Truman's old outfit, Mancini spent several months in Army hospitals.

The enforced rest and good food soon ballooned Lenny into a 195-pounder.

The doctors who had despaired of his life now felt he would never box again. Mancini was determined to fool them once more and when he was discharged, he rigorously trained down to his old weight limit of 140 pounds.

Now, in the opinion of many, Lenny is boxing better than ever. His punches seem stiffer and sharper and his endurance greater. While many ex-G.I.'s who came back after three or more years of war found it hard to regain their old form and quit fighting, Mancini, a Purple Heart campaigner, has proved an inspiration to other wounded men, be they boxers or just "good Joes" trying to come back along the rugged road to full recovery. □

BY EDDIE MERRILL

Ed Note: But Mancini never fully recovered. He fought as a middleweight but was taking a pounding every fight. Only his heart and extra-ordinary tough skin allowed him to go the distance. There was mention of a $250,000 payday against a rising boxer named Rocky Graziano; but Graziano opted for Sammy Horne instead. By the end of 1947, Lenny "Boom Boom" Mancini had retired at age 28.

I WATCH EVERY STEP THAT THIS MAN TAKES
I LISTEN TO EVERY SOUND THAT THIS MAN MAKES
I TOUCH EVERY PART OF THIS MAN'S FACE, AND
I HOLD THIS MAN'S BODY WHEN WE EMBRACE.

■

I CRY EVERY TEAR THAT THIS MAN CRIES
I TRY EVERY TASK THAT THIS MAN TRIES
I KEEP EVERY MEMORY THAT THIS MAN KEEPS
I LEAP EVERY MOUNTAIN THAT THIS MAN LEAPS.

■

I WANT TO BE LIKE THIS COURAGEOUS MAN
FOR I LOVE THIS MAN THE BEST WAY I CAN
I LOVE YOU DAD, I REALLY WANT YOU TO KNOW
I WANT TO BE LIKE YOU, AND WALK IN YOUR SHADOW.

■

I WANT TO FEEL THIS MAN'S PAINS . .
I WANT TO BE LOCKED IN THIS MAN'S CHAINS
I WANT TO BE HIS MODEL AND LIVE WITH HIS GREAT NAME
FOR I AM THIS MAN'S SON, AND I'LL NEVER BEAR SHAME.
. . . . . RAY "BOOM BOOM" MANCINI, 1974

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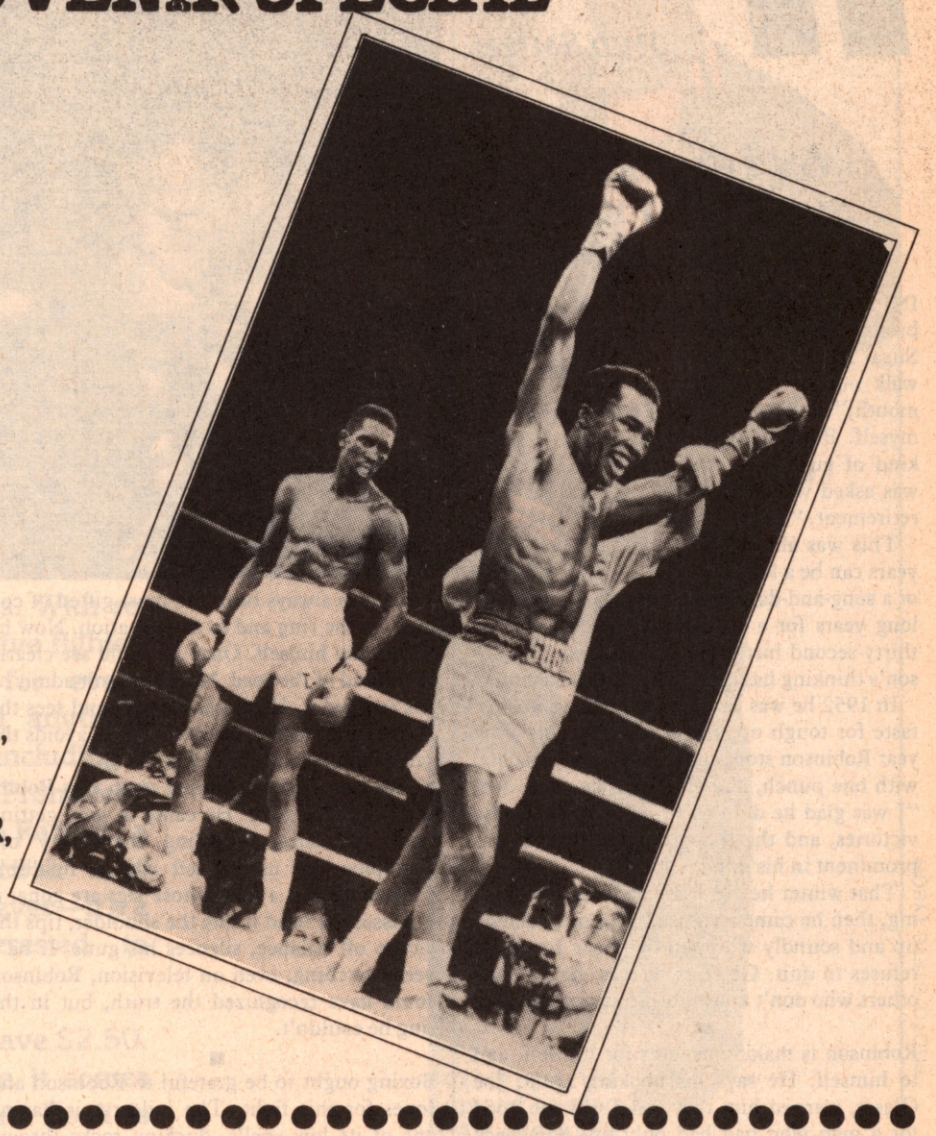

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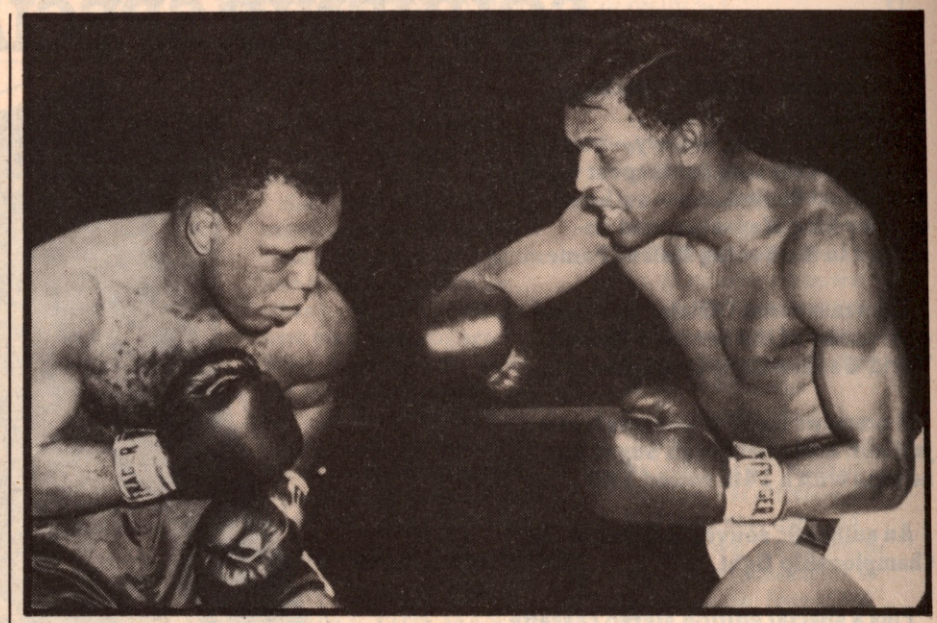

IN A TRAINING CAMP, SOMEBODY brought up the name of Randy Turpin, and Sugar Robinson shook his head. "If he was to walk out in the street and hit me in the mouth," Robinson said, "I'd have to defend myself. But I don't want any more of those kind of guys." At the same time Robinson was asked whether he could foresee his own retirement. "The day is not far," he said.

This was almost three yers ago, and three years can be a long time in the life of a fighter or a song-and-dance man. They are especially long years for a fighter who has passed his thirty-second birthday. In that space, Robinson's thinking has changed again and again.

In 1952 he was candidly expressing his distaste for tough opponents like Turpin. That year Robinson stopped rough Rocky Graziano with one punch, and afterward he confessed, "I was glad he didn't get up." He liked easy victories, and the thought of retirement was prominent in his mind.

That winter he did retire and went to dancing, then he came unretired, and now, shown up and soundly whipped by Tiger Jones, he refuses to quit. Great as he was, he's all the others who don't know how to say goodbye.

■

Robinson is making excuses for himself, and to himself. He says his booking agent, Joe Glaser, warned him that Jones was too good for a man who had had only one comeback match (with shipworn Joe Rindone) but that "being egotistical," Ray insisted on taking him on.

Robinson is sure that a few more bouts against lesser opponents would remold him nearer to the heart's desire. Lesser opponents? Jones is a good club fighter, properly unranked. He had lost his last five fights, though all on close decisions. How far down toward the bottom of the barrel would commissions allow Robinson to grope?

Ray has always been the most gifted of con men, in the ring and in conversation. Now he is conning himself. Once he could see clearly to the end of the road. Now he won't admit he has reached it. He closes his eyes and sees the Robinson of 1950. His inward gaze avoids the calender which reads "1955."

Jones exposed the glaring truth that Robinson's legs are gone. He came in low, getting under punches, crowding the weary old champion. He used a left jab, an infallible weapon against a man whose legs are gone; if it misses the head it hits the shoulder, tips the victim off balance, silences his guns. If he'd been watching, even on television, Robinson could have recognized the truth, but in the ring he couldn't.

■

Boxing ought to be grateful to Robinson and Jones for this fight. The industry is having one of its low spells, ducking rocks thrown from every quarter. In their way, Robinson and Jones spoke eloquently for the defense.

Robinson was the ringside favorite at 8-to-1, not only because he once had been good enough to justify such odds but mostly because the angle guys wouldn't believe Jones would be permitted to win.

Jim Norris, they were saying, was building Robinson up for a big shot with Kid Gavilan in Miami and bigger one with Bobo Olson in San Francisco. He wouldn't jeopardize those juicy gates in a tune-up match. Bobby Melnick couldn't have got the bout for Jones without agreeing to handcuff his boy. So they were saying.

So Jones made one of his best fights, and there was the answer. No use even suggesting a betting coup. Even at 8-to-1, no bettor could take a profit remotely comparable to the way swag from outfoor fights with Gavilan and Olson. If a $100 dollar bill showed on the underdog, the fight would go off the boards.

The same paper that carried the fight result also announced that Rocky Graziano's life story would be filmed in Hollywood. There's a whole movie plot in that coincidence alone. Graziano finished his last fight on the floor in Chicago, knocked senseless by Robinson's right hand. Rocky never had the class or the breaks that Sugar Ray had. When Robinson was earning big money and putting it to work for him in businesses, Graziano was being booted around by politicians and patrioteers. He was an unlettered slob, Robinson the cock of the roost.

Now the smart one is back in the ring getting belted around by a club fighter. The one who didn't have sense enough to stay out of jail found a better way. He's a television star of sorts. His autobiography is in the stalls. He's getting, by report, $200,000 for film rights. Sugar Ray gets $12,000 and a licking.

JANUARY 21, 1955 □

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